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This volume comprises discourses on subjects of social and political interest, such as Catholicism and Marriage, Chastity, Rationalism, Humility, Brotherhood, Kindness, Rights of Man, Socialism, Church and State, Liberty, Ireland, Love of Jesus Christ, etc., drawn from the *Conférences* of Lacordaire. He never preached without sedulous preparation after profound meditation, and such men as Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Guizot, Victor Hugo, Sainte-Beuve, and Montalembert were eager to hear his addresses.

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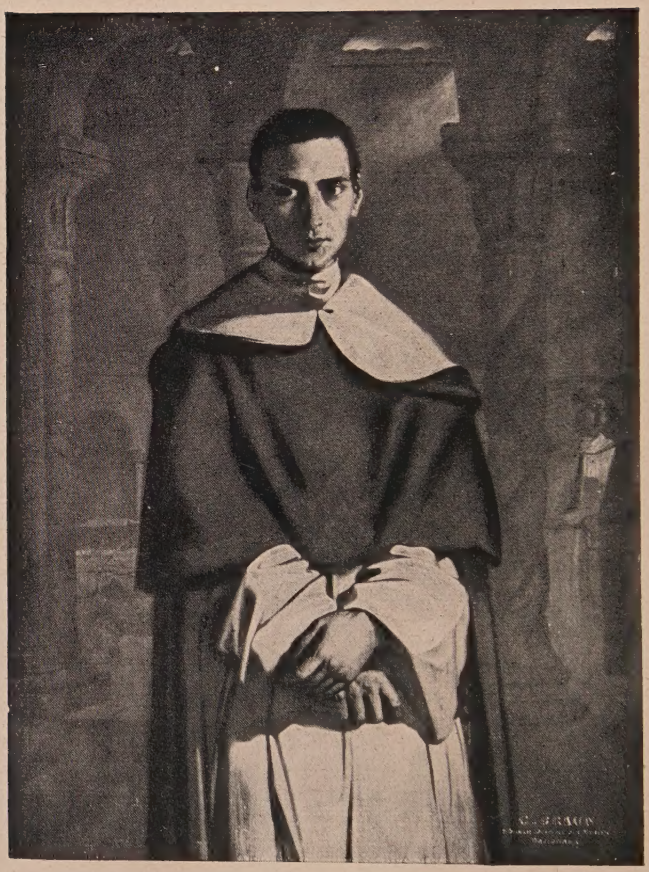

LACORDAIRE

From the painting by Théodore Chassériau (1840) in the Musée du Louvre.

[*frontispiece*

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

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FROM THE FRENCH OF

LACORDAIRE

EDITED BY THE

REV. D. O'MAHONY, B.D., B.C.L.

Editor of *Great French Sermons* and *Panegyrics of the Saints from Bossuet and Bourdaloue*

"Ideas are the most potent of weapons."—NAPOLEON.
"It is ideas that govern the world."—F. BRUNETIÈRE.

LONDON
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRUBNER & CO., LTD.
ST. LOUIS, MO.: B. HERDER BOOK COMPANY
1924

252
L119p

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY MACKAYS LTD., CHATHAM

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PREFACE

THIS volume comprises discourses of Lacordaire on subjects of social and political interest. There are numerous books and essays in English *about* Lacordaire; yet of the *Conférences* which are his chief title to renown there has been but one English translation, and that has long been out of print.*

Of the present translations, one or two have been adapted from Henry Langdon's English version; the others have been made specially for these pages, Langdon's rendering of many of the discourses not being very satisfactory. We are also indebted for a few phrases to M. M. C. Calthrop, Mrs Sidney Lear, and others. The exordiums and perorations of several of the Conferences have been curtailed, and most of the second part of the one on Humility has been omitted. Under the heading "Catholicism and Ireland," are some sections of the panegyric on Daniel O'Connell, which was delivered in Paris at Notre Dame in 1847.

*Henry Langdon's translation of the first thirty-six Conferences of Notre Dame was published in London in 1853. His translation of twenty-three more of them, including the eight masterly ones on Jesus Christ, was issued in three volumes in 1869–72, and later in a one-volume edition, and ran to over 9,000 copies. The six Conferences of Toulouse, considered by Montalembert to be the author's most unblemished ones, were published in London in Langdon's English version in 1873, a second edition being issued in 1875. The remaining fourteen of the Notre Dame Conferences have not appeared in English.

The author has himself indicated the scope and character of his Conferences. They belong wholly neither to dogmatic teaching nor to pure controversy; they are a medley of both. Addressed to a country where religious ignorance went hand in hand with intellectual cultivation, and where error was more audacious than learned and deep, they treat of Divine things in a language calculated to reach the hearts and the needs of his contemporaries. God had prepared him for that task by suffering long years of his youth to be passed in forgetfulness of His love.*

When, in 1835, he took possession of the pulpit of Notre Dame, a vast multitude of men of every age, creed and profession thronged to hear him. "It was not Paris," says his Dominican biographer, "it was France itself which had thus come forth to see—a prophet! Yes, truly, and one gifted with an especial message to the age which he understood and loved so well. The spectacle was a strangely moving one: here were the disciples of Voltaire hanging upon

*Cf. Dora Greenwell, *Memoir of Lacordaire* (Edinburgh, 1867), chap. iii: "Lacordaire's Conferences are all framed upon one design, that of bringing society face to face with the Gospel and the Church, and showing how, without the regenerating influence they alone can impart, family ties dissolve, liberty becomes licence, and authority despotism." Speaking of his college life, Lacordaire himself says: "There was nothing around us to sustain our faith. I am the last person to deprecate the study of the ancient classic authors: I know too well our deep obligation to them in all that concerns the pure sentiment of beauty'; I confess how much we owe them as regards priceless natural virtues, lofty recollections, and the noble union of heroic characters and memorable epochs. But I feel that, while the ancient world was presented to us under its most sublime and attractive aspect, the new world—the world created by the Gospel—was to us an unknown and undiscovered realm. Its great men, its saints, its civilization, its moral and social superiority, the progress of humanity under the banner of the Cross—all this remained a blank."

the accents of a Catholic priest ; the children of the men who had in 1789 driven forth Christ from that very temple, listening with eager, rapt attention to the voice of one who spoke of Him, and of Him only, as the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

His brilliant career was strangely chequered and stormy. He figured as a barrister, a priest, a journalist, a famous preacher, a Dominican friar, a republican deputy, a schoolmaster, a member of the French Academy. Bidding farewell at the age of forty-nine to the pulpit of Notre Dame, he said : " I have arrived at the midway of life, *nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita*, where a man lays aside the last ray of youth, and descends by a steep incline to the shores of powerlessness and oblivion." His subsequent conferences at Toulouse came to an abrupt end, and he finally retired from the pulpit in 1854, from a spontaneous fear (as he tells us) lest his liberty should be shackled amid a world which had lost its own.*

The reader of the Conferences will bear in mind that they were not written out before being delivered. Lacordaire preached extempore, but

**Cf.* E. Faguet, *Le Libéralisme* (Paris, 1912), p. 307 : " France is one of the least free countries in the world and one of the least liberal. Voltaire, the most absolutist of men, is an admirable representative of the French spirit, liberalism not being French." And *The Church Times* (Nov. 25, 1921) : " It is becoming increasingly apparent that liberty, equality and fraternity are three things which no Republican understands." Also Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, English trans. (London, 1862) : " America is the most democratic country in the world, and is at the same time the country in which the Roman Catholic religion makes the most progress."

never without sedulous preparation*; after profound meditation on his subject and careful arrangement of the main lines of his discourse, he was able to express from the pulpit with vehement eloquence, in words which were the choice of the moment, the thoughts that filled his mind and struggled for utterance. It is, then, not to be expected that his sermons in print will exhibit very much dignity of language or studied elegance of diction. And yet such men as Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Cousin, Guizot, Victor Hugo and Sainte-Beuve were eager, no less than Berryer and Montalembert, to hear his improvised addresses; "the thousands who thrilled to his voice under the vaulted roof of Notre Dame," wrote F. Ozanam, "asked themselves whether they were listening to an angel or to a man." His Conferences on Chastity (says Sainte-Beuve†) might have seemed to be strangely audacious, were it not for the candour which clothed his audacity and the prodigious talent with which he handled his subject; their beauty (according to Mrs Sidney Lear‡) remains above all criticism, like an exquisite pearl

Cf. V. McNabb, O.P., *Lacordaire* (London: C.T.S.): "When he was headmaster of the military school of Sorèze (1854–1861), Lacordaire often preached to the boys, and never without preparation. It was edifying to know that this master of sacred eloquence thought it not misspent time to give a week's preparation to the boys' conference."

†Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries du Lundi* (Paris, 1852; Eng. trans. by E. J. Trechman, London, 1910), vol. i. See also Count d'Haussonville, *Lacordaire* (Paris, 1895; Eng. trans. by A. W. Evans, London, 1913), chaps. v, vii; and Count de Montalembert, *Memoir of Lacordaire*, Eng. trans. by the Rev. J. Trenor (London, 1863).

‡ Mrs H. L. Sidney Lear, *Lacordaire: A Biographical Sketch* (London, 1882), chap. vii.

which no breath can tarnish. All his Conferences, considering that they were extemporary and popular, are remarkably free from diffuseness of style and from any looseness of arrangement; and their modernness, their originality of treatment, has benefited many French and English preachers.* He strove to show (writes Professor Lanson†) that the Christian solution of all the great problems was liberal and democratic.

Democracy itself (as the late Mr Bryce avowed) is based on the Christian doctrine of the equality of souls: Christian fraternal charity is a force more potent than mere humanitarian brotherhood or political socialism. Lacordaire lived and died an intrepid democrat, a penitent Catholic and an impenitent liberal.‡ Like his friend

Cf. Canon H. Scott-Holland, in the *Dict. of Nat. Biog.*: "Canon Liddon had studied the great school of French oratory, admiring especially Bourdaloue, and of later preachers the influence of Lacordaire is distinctly discernible. To their example he owed the completeness with which he arranged the framework of his sermons as well as much of the manner and method of his appeals." Also Rev. W. J. Sparrow-Simpson, *French Catholics in the 19th Century* (London, 1918): "The sermons of Lacordaire are magnificent in their elevation and their eloquence. As a study for preachers he is excellent. He has exerted considerable influence over Englishmen, and more than one distinguished preacher of this country has obviously profited by him."

†Lanson, *Hist. de la Litt. Franç.* (Paris, 1909), p. 928. See Cardinal Newman, *Apologia*, Note A, which deals with Lacordaire's use of the word liberalism. Also V. McNabb, O.P., *From a Friar's Cell* (Oxford, 1923), chap. xix; and the Abbé Gellon, *Trois Précurseurs du Renouveau Catholique* (Avignon, 1923).

‡*Cf.* Dupanloup, *De la Pacification Religieuse*: "What is meant by the spirit of the French Revolution? Are we to understand free institutions, liberty of conscience, political liberty, civil and individual liberty, the liberty of families, freedom of education, liberty of opinion, equality before the law, the equal distribution of public taxes and burdens? All this we not only honestly accept, but all this we call for in the broad light of public discussion. These liberties, so dear to those who charge us with not loving them, we champion; we ask them for ourselves as well as for others." See also E. Faguet, *Mgr Dupanloup* (Paris, 1914), chap. vii. And Hilaire Belloc, *The*

Montalembert, he sought to pursue the ideal of loving God more even than freedom and his country, of loving freedom and his country a thousand times more than life, and of preserving to France that holy religion without which there is neither happiness, glory, nor true freedom.* He tells us that he reached Catholic belief through social belief; and no better argument, it appeared to him, can be adduced for Catholicism than that of its being the necessary means of bringing society to its true perfection. To his

French Revolution (London, 1911): "A man who knows both his Faith and the Republic will tell you that there is not and cannot be any necessary or fundamental reason why conflict should have arisen between a European Democracy and the Catholic Church." Also Card. Manning's Preface to Kathleen O'Meara's *Frederic Ozanam* (London, 1878): "M. de Broglie has said that the principles of 1789 were formulated and published not only as a charter for France but as a gospel for mankind. M. Thiers said to a bishop on his way to the Vatican Council, 'Do not attack the principles of 1789; whoso touches them touches the marrow of Frenchmen.' They have penetrated into the intelligence and created a public opinion which affects even those who resist them."

*Cf. Lacordaire, *Conferences of Notre Dame*, li: "That memorable inscription, *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*, is, in fact, a part of the primitive charter which has united men together and founded the human race; but it is not the whole of it. It is the charter of rights, not that of duties. Write then, if you would found durable institutions, write above the word liberty, obedience; above equality, hierarchy; above fraternity, reverence; above the august symbol of rights, the divine symbol of duties. Right is the selfish side of virtue; duty is its generous and devoted side." Also Guizot, *Meditations on Christianity*, Eng. trans. (London, 1871): "Three words, *Rights of Man*, inscribed upon the banners of the French Revolution, constituted its force; the rights of man as man, rights by this title alone, by virtue alone of his humanity. Three other words, *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*, have served as a commentary upon the three former. It is in the name of these two maxims that the French Revolution is making the tour of the world; they are the sources of the good and the evil. Whilst all of true and good that these two maxims contain is Christian and was proclaimed by Christianity, all that they have of false and fatal is condemned and expressly repudiated by Christianity. Not only that, but Christianity alone, in point of fact, has the necessary authority and moral force to suppress the evil without at the same time causing the good also to perish." See also Mrs Oliphant, *Memoir of Montalembert* (Edinburgh, 1872); and M. Calthrop, *Lacordaire and Montalembert* (London: C.T.S.).

mind, as to Chateaubriand's, the principles of Christianity are the future of the world; he would make liberalism Catholic, he would make a union of Catholicism and liberty, that society might be saved.* Throughout his Conferences he insists that indisputably Christianity is the greatest phenomenon that has been naturalized in the civilized world, the greatest intellectual phenomenon, the greatest moral phenomenon, and the greatest social phenomenon; and on this great historical fact he bases his proof for the truth of the Catholic Faith.†

*Brunetière, in his *Cinq Lettres sur Renan*, quotes as a profound truth the aphorism of Pope Pius VII, "Let us be good Christians and we shall be excellent democrats." *Cf.* Montalembert, *Speech at Mechlin*, 1863: "To correct democracy by liberty and to reconcile Catholicism with democracy, on these two problems depends the future of modern society. The first is much the more difficult of the two. The natural affinities of democracy, on the one hand with despotism, on the other with the spirit of revolution, are the great lessons of history, and the great threat of the future." And R. Flint, *The Philosophy of History*: "The chief aim of Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* was to demonstrate that democracy was in imminent peril of issuing in despotism; and that the more thoroughly the democratic spirit did its work in levelling and destroying social inequalities and distinctions, just so much the less resistance would the establishment of despotism encounter. Mr Bryce's *American Commonwealth* has derived to some extent much of its merit from the epoch-making treatise of Tocqueville." Also Bishop von Ketteler, *The Liberty of the Church*: "Liberty can indeed bring dreadful things, but it also brings the highest blessings of humanity. Religion has every reason to welcome liberty, for under the banner of liberty it will develop all the strength of its truth. But just as religion needs liberty, so liberty needs religion. If men do not return to religion they cannot stand liberty."

†*Cf.* Guizot, *op. cit.*: "The history of Christianity is the strongest proof of its Divinity, and the surest guarantee for its future." And Hilaire Belloc, *Speech at Cardiff*, 1922: "European civilization was made by the Catholic Church, and in the absence of the Catholic Church it would decay. And the people of this country do not know that. Everthing the world looks upon to-day—save the ugly—is the product of Rome's pagan civilization, converted, complicated, livened by Catholicism. With many set-backs the general trend of Europe is towards the restoration of a Catholic Europe as a whole." *Cf.* also Ozanam, *La Civilisation au 5ième siècle*, Eng. trans. (London, 1868): "The Church's outlook enables her to regard difficult and

"The labours of Lacordaire and his companions," says the *Church Times* (Aug. 5,1921), "were fruitful for France in a time of urgent need." Such efforts as theirs are still needful. "We may say," wrote F. W. H. Myers, in his *Science and a Future Life* (London, 1893), "that in 1888 France possesses everything except illusions; in 1788 she possessed illusions and nothing else. The Reign of Reason, the Return to Nature, the Social Contract, Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity—the whole air of that wild time buzzed with new-hatched chimeras, while at the same time the old traditions of Catholicism, Loyalty, Honour, were still living in many an ardent heart. What then is, in effect, the disenchantment which France has undergone? What are the illusions—the so-called, so-judged illusions—which are fading now before the influence of materialistic science? We find them reducible to four heads: the religious, the political, the sexual, and the personal illusions."

We are indebted to Messrs Longmans and Co., London, for permission to quote from Mrs Sidney Lear's Life of Henri Perreyve, and from her Biographical Sketch of Lacordaire; and to Messrs Macmillan and Co., London, for a like permission.

D. O'M.

St Edmund's, Southampton.

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menacing times with a firm and calm glance, and wisely to distinguish the real property of the past amidst the trembling destinies of the future." In connection with the Conference on "Catholicism and Civil Authority," see Hilaire Belloc's article on "Dante the Monarchist" in *The Catholic World* (New York, Sept., 1921).

LACORDAIRE (1802—1861).

"Neither time, nor man's injustice, nor the 'treacheries of glory,' can ever deprive Lacordaire of the true greatness of his character, of the dignity of having been the most manly, the most finely tempered, the most hero-like man of his time; of having grasped and proved, as none else had done, that indispensable alliance of faith and liberty which alone can redeem modern society. His voice was undoubtedly the most eloquent that has been heard in the pulpit since the time of the incomparable Bossuet."—MONTALEMBERT.

"No man has been more richly endowed with the Divine gift of sacred eloquence than Lacordaire, with the sole exception of Bossuet. But while Bossuet was a universal genius, superior in everything and by everything,—in eloquence, in controversy, in history—Lacordaire was only an orator; perhaps more of an orator than Bossuet, at least in that he had 'the tones that move, the voice that thrills and charms, and the gesture which completes speech.'"—COUNT D'HAUSSONVILLE.

"Lacordaire, from the pulpit of Notre Dame, painted in all their splendour the truths, the beauties, the moral and social excellences of the Christian Faith and of the Catholic Church. A numerous auditory, believers and freethinkers, flocked round him."—GUIZOT.

"Lacordaire defended the Divine origin of Christianity with originality, emotion, fire and vigour, with the penetration and lofty sentiment of a mind eminently equipped for intellectual combat."—BISHOP DUPANLOUP.

"Among those orators of the modern pulpit, some of whom, one of whom at least (Father de Ravignan), might vie with Lacordaire in real warmth, in sympathy and unction, there is not one who can compare with him in boldness of views and flight of ideas, in the novelty and often the felicity of his expressions, in the vivacity and unexpectedness of his movements, in the brilliancy and ardour of his speech, in the imagination and even the poetry which animate his eloquence."—SAINTE-BEUVE.

"Lacordaire was above the middle height, with an excellent countenance; great dignity in his look and bearing, but nothing ascetic; his manners animated, and every gesture and movement showing the orator. Never did any man so give one the sense of his being a natural orator, perfect in ease and simplicity. I have seen very few people more impressive; he was not a great modern thinker, but a great Christian orator of the fourth century, born in the nineteenth."—MATTHEW ARNOLD.

"When we say that Lacordaire carried romanticism into the pulpit, we seek to indicate his brilliant flights of imagination, and also a certain lyricism that inflames his eloquence."—M. RENÉ DOUMIC.

" Never had Bossuet or Bourdaloue, when they were summoned to preach before the most august Court in the world, enjoyed so great a popularity as Lacordaire ; never before had the cathedral of Notre Dame seen assembled under its vaulted roof crowds so numerous and so intensely moved. This immense audience was at first restless, unquiet, mocking. But how soon it allowed itself to be carried away by that amazing man who could hold it spellbound with a look, who dominated it with a gesture, who brought it face to face with the eternal truths ! "—PÈRE M. A. JANVIER, O.P.

" Lacordaire's profoundly-conceived apologetic prepared his country for the Faith ; he converted public opinion."—*The Church Times* (May 11, 1923).

" I do not believe that it is possible for me to differ in any im portant matter from Count Montalembert and Father Lacordaire, two men whom I so highly admire. In their general line of thought and conduct I enthusiastically concur, and consider them to be before their age."—CARDINAL NEWMAN.

" The works of Lacordaire are the monuments of a Frenchman who remains our contemporary, for he was what he claimed to be, a citizen of the future."—THE ABBÉ A. CHAUVIN.

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I

Catholicism and Marriage

To-day, Gentlemen, I propose to examine what the Gospel has done for family life and family relationships. The very nature of the subject will require me sometimes to touch upon delicate points; but I hope that in doing so I shall keep strictly within the bounds consecrated by Christian language, and even by the language of that great age of Louis XIV to which God gave the grace of supreme Christian eloquence.

The family is made up of the father, the mother, and the child. Of the child I shall only speak by the way, because its destiny depends on the relations between the father and the mother, and where those relations are just and humane the fate of the child is itself a good and happy one. I shall leave the child out of the discussion, so as to avoid needless complication.

According to the tradition committed to the Sacred Scriptures, God, having made man, looked upon him, and found that he was alone. He then wrapped him in a deep, mysterious sleep; and while he slept, the Creator, laying

His hand upon his heart, detached a portion of the natural buckler which covers it, formed of it a new being, and having aroused the sleeper, presented to him the companion who was to share his life. The man, in an ecstasy of delight, recognized himself in another who was not himself, and uttered those first words of love: *This now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man; wherefore a man shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh* (Gen. ii, 23–24). That saying, that solemn nuptial chant, contained the whole constitution of the family; the reciprocal dignity of the man and the woman, the indissolubility of their union, and the subsistence of that union in two individuals only. First, dignity, since the woman was taken out of man, and she can therefore never be reproached with having been formed of an inferior clay; next, indissolubility, since their union was in one and the same flesh; finally, unity, since that flesh was the one flesh of two only.

And if, putting aside Biblical tradition, we search in our hearts to discover the true relationships between man and woman, we shall still arrive at the same conclusions. Indeed, the dearest, the deepest, the most tender affection, that which more than any other contains in itself the very ideal of happiness, such as we

picture it for ourselves, is, whether weighed by the balance of the heart or by the balance of the sanctuary, the affection that unites a man to his legitimate consort. Now, wherever there is affection, there is a communication of dignity. True affection has never been known to injure; it honours, respects, venerates, elevates what is lowly, transfiguring it into itself. It is even one of our soul's dreams to love something that is below ourselves, so as to enjoy the pleasure of raising it up to our own level; and this is a feeling so subtle, so beautiful in its refined sublimity, that God Himself experiences it, and it is (we may venture to say) the explanation of all that He has done for man. An ancient writer* has said: "Friendship finds or makes equals"; a maxim which is still of daily application, and tends to relax for the happiness of society in general the rigid line drawn between class and class. Now, this maxim applies especially to woman, because the love which we bear her is the highest of all earthly loves. I say 'we"; for even we, with the exalted dignity of the priesthood and of an everlasting chastity upon us, even we have, or have had, a mother, a sister, and consequently are not shut out from a share in that sacred affection to which I refer, the gift of God to all men and the very salt of life.

In the second place, affection naturally produces indissolubility. Who is the being so base

* Seneca.

when he loves, as to calculate the moment when he will cease to love? What being is so unworthy of conceiving and meriting affection, as to live with his loved one as if his affection for her must one day cease? Which of us, on the contrary, does not cherish the belief—a belief often mistaken but still one which does us honour—that, having once loved, he will always love; which of us does not persuade himself, at least for the moment, that he will not only love always, but ever with the same enthusiasm, ardour and freshness of heart? Many are mistaken, I admit; but what I have described is none the less the innate characteristic of every serious and true attachment.

Unity is another. We do not love in threes but only in twos. It is impossible to imagine an affection of the same nature and of the same strength existing between three souls. It is even on this account that we possess so small a capacity for loving. Our love is exclusive; when we give ourselves, we give ourselves but to one; and it required all the power of Jesus Christ to give breadth to our affections without destroying their energy.*

So, then, our heart and the Bible tell us the same thing, and on no other point are they in more perfect accordance; they tell us that the

* *Cf.* Canon W. Barry, *The New Antigone:* "The charm of love is, in the for once poetical imagery of Swedenborg, that it draws two spirits from the ends of heaven to meet and embrace, obeying the secret laws of affinity which makes them and them only fit for one another."

relationships between man and woman are those of dignity, indissolubility, and unity.

But when, putting aside the heart and the Bible, we turn to history, does the same view open before our eyes? Have we dignity, indissolubility and unity presented there as obtaining in the relationships between man and woman? No, Gentlemen; we find quite the reverse. History shows us man heaping every kind of contempt and degradation upon his hapless helpmate, forcing upon her continually the sense of her own weakness and incapacity. He has made her a captive, shrouded her in a veil, hidden her away in the most secluded part of his house, as if she were some mischievous elf or a suspected slave. He has stunted her feet from her infancy, in order to render her incapable of moving and of carrying her oppressed heart whither she would. He has made her his servant, compelling her to discharge the most laborious and painful duties. He has refused to allow her any kind of education or any intellectual pleasures; so much so that in some countries a traveller, meeting one of those degraded beings and asking her his way, is answered in one short sentence: "I don't know, I am only a woman." Ah, how can we reckon up all that man has done against woman! She has been taken in marriage as goods and chattels are bought and sold; she has been declared incapable of inheriting from father or mother, incapable of making a

will, incapable of exercising tutelage over her own children, and has had to return herself into tutelage on the dissolution of her marriage by death. In fact, the study of the different heathen legislations is a perpetual revelation of her ignominy; and more than one of those legislations, carrying mistrust even to the utmost point of barbarity, has actually obliged her in the full bloom of her youth and beauty to follow the corpse of her husband and to immolate herself on his funeral pile, in order (remarks a jurisconsult) that the life of the husband may be in safety, the wife knowing that she could in no case survive him.

What injustice! What astounding degradation! But that is not all. Dishonoured already by so many outrages offered to her weakness, she has also been liable to be repudiated by her husband. She came young and beautiful; she is turned away, withered by age or by sickness, like a piece of furniture which we are eager to put out of sight when it has become damaged and unsightly. The Latin satirists have preserved for us some of those scenes of infamy, even to the insolent words of the slave coming to tell the discarded wife, his mistress of yesterday, that she was no longer even a slave like himself.*

* *Cf.* Archbishop P. J. Ryan, *Christian Civilization* (London: C.T.S.): "Seneca laments the fact of almost daily divorce in Rome in her most cultured period. Juvenal, who lashed the vices and the vicious of his day, tells us of one woman who by divorce married

And there is yet more and much worse to be mentioned. Think of polygamy, the degrading plurality of wives. Troops of those beings so worthy of honour in the sight of God and even in the estimation of our own hearts, troops of women penned up like cattle within four walls, in a dreary seclusion that is only broken at long intervals in a long succession of wearisome days and nights by a momentary show, I will not say of affection, but of lust.

Such is history! such is the condition of woman in history!

And, the Gospel being come, the Gospel having lifted her up, degradation and servitude have not ceased for her all at once; they have only ceased where the Gospel has prevailed; everywhere else her condition, what we might call her natural condition, has remained unaltered. You have proof of this not far from you. Has the Mussulman, who came six centuries after the Gospel, ever cared to give woman her proper place of dignity? Why, at your very doors, as if to defy you, he has raised the four walls of captivity and contempt; he has shut in there the poor victims of his odious lust, not all of

eight husbands in five months. Even the 'divine' Plato, the 'most naturally Christian' of the pagan philosophers, advocated a community of wives, and on the ground that the children would then become the property of the State. Hymen, the god of marriage, was represented in Roman mythology as the son of Venus, the goddess of impurity, by Bacchus, the god of drunkenness. How degraded was woman, whom God made far purer than man! Such was the world when in the stable of Bethlehem, the birthplace of civilization, stood a woman."

them, perhaps, branded with the same degree of servitude and shame; but what matters the little more or the little less when scorn and dishonour are your portion? The Sultana reigns, as far as it is possible to reign over a heart that is shared among and wasted upon so many others; she reigns, but as the lowest peasant-woman in France would not condescend to reign. The spectacle of Mussulman life, its morals and manners, among a people by no means deficient in native greatness of soul, is a warning from Providence to any Christian woman who may be tempted into apostasy by the sternness of the Gospel; for she learns from that spectacle the cost of the love which is not under the protection of God, and she learns what a man's adoration for a woman becomes the moment he ceases to adore Jesus Christ. She learns there the depth of degradation to which she descends when the sacred hand of our Divine Lord is no longer upon man to restrain and purify him and her, and to make them both a very sanctuary of faithful and reverent love.*

Even among ourselves, Gentlemen, as soon as the Gospel waters abate a little, what do we hear? The hollow cry of divorce, the yell of the human

* A few modern journalists and others, misinterpreting a passage in St Gregory of Tours' *Historia Francorum*, have circulated the silly myth that the Second Council of Mâcon seriously debated the question whether woman had a human soul. In that Council a single bishop, apparently on philological grounds, declared that a woman could not be called *homo*. But the other bishops immediately took him to task, and convinced him of his error.

animal who howls for brutal liberty, and clamours to be set free from the irking yoke of a duty which is insupportable to him because it restrains and thwarts his vile desires. We have heard that shameful cry; it has even triumphed for a moment in our own country*; it still triumphs in a part of Europe where Christianity is ill defended by heresy and schism. There, a wife, a Christian wife, finds herself cast out from a family which she has founded with her blood; she ceases to be a mother on ceasing to be a wife; divorce deprives her, as we deprive the brute beast, of a portion of her own offspring, the children whom she has borne in her womb and nourished with her tears and her love. But the she-wolf, in the wild depths of the forest, when her young are torn from her, resents the cruel injury; and you, in a Christian land, snatch the child from its mother's sheltering arms; you do not fear to inflict an injury on her which the tiger would not forgive you in the wilds of the jungle!

How shall we account for so strange an overthrow of the laws of nature and affection? I can understand slavery, that abuse of property. The slave is a stranger; he has fallen into slavery by the chances of war or of birth; he has no place in his master's memories or in his heart.

* Divorce, introduced in France by the revolutionary legislation, then abolished in 1816, has been re-established by the legislation of 1886. The evil of divorce forms the subject of M. Paul Bourget's novel entitled *Un Divorce*.

But the companion whom man has chosen for himself, to whom in his ardent youth he vowed a life-long honour and devotion, who is his equal by birth, who has shared his home, to whom he has divulged his every thought and feeling, who has given him days, and it may be years, of unforgettable happiness, who has borne him children growing up to be his pride and delight—why, oh, why should she be dishonoured? What has she done? What does the man gain by degrading her? I am going to tell you what he gains: for after having seen the phenomenon it is very necessary to know its cause; it is needful to penetrate into the heart of man and explore all its corruption and repulsiveness, in order that the renovation wrought by the power of the Gospel may appear to us in the fulness of its reality.

Three forms of egotism in the heart of man combine to abase and degrade woman. The first is the egotism of jealousy. We love, it is true; but there is so little that is lovable in our own selves, the years pass so rapidly, carrying with them as swiftly the charms of our youth and vigour, that the moment comes when we doubt of ourselves and of our power to merit affection. Yet we desire to retain that which would no longer come to us of itself; we still aspire to a passion whose day is long past for us; rather than obey nature, we wish to do her violence, and to resuscitate by slavery that which liberty

has taken from us. This is the secret reason which has everywhere condemned woman to a constraint and captivity more or less complete.

Another kind of egotism, that of inconstancy, has militated against her in a different way. We grow weary. The day arrives when we wake up as from a dream, amazed to find that we have ceased to love what only yesterday we were still adoring. We ask ourselves why this is. Nothing is changed but our heart, and that has sustained a shock from which it will never recover. What is to be done ? How can we go on living in this state of torture ? For it is nothing less than torture to have constantly before our eyes an object that was once our delight but is now absolutely indifferent, if not absolutely repellent to us. Our fickleness, our changeableness, finds but one answer, and that answer is given by the dissolution of marriage. Jealousy made the woman a captive, inconstancy thrusts her forth from her husband's heart and home.

There remains a third course, taken by a third form of egotism, and it is that of a plurality of wives, or a continual succession of wives. Our self-seeking is so subtle that sometimes we require, in order to be contented, to introduce into our life a combination of custom and novelty. This is effected by the multiplication of marriage ; we thus form for ourselves a sort of little court, in which memory and caprice alike play their part, in which past and present

mingle, and each day brings to our inexhaustible inconstancy the pleasing excitement of taking a new wife and repudiating the old one.

Such is man ; and this triple form of egotism, reduced into one, simply means lack of love. This is the reproach which St. Paul brings against the heathens, when, after having enumerated their various crimes, he ends by accusing them of being *without affection* (Rom. i, 31). Love, purely human, is a fleeting effervescence, produced by causes which themselves are transitory ; it springs into life in the morning, but withers and dies before the day is done. It is not the act of a man that is master of himself, sure of his will, and carrying the energy of duty into the most secret joys of his heart. True love is a virtue : it supposes a soul constant and resolute, which, without being insensible to the charm of nature's fugitive gifts, penetrates beyond them into the abiding region of the beautiful and discovers, even amid ruins, an efflorescence fair and sweet, which touches and attracts the steadfast and faithful soul. But the Christian soul alone possesses this creative faculty ; the others stop short at the surface, and see death and decay on all sides.* Two

* *Cf.* Bishop J. L. Spalding, *Glimpses of Truth* (Chicago, 1903) : " The man and the woman attract each other, but unless they are drawn and held by some higher and more stable force than sexual passion, they soon find that to be bound in wedlock is to be enslaved. . . . Woman's deepest and tenderest love is wholly removed from sensual thoughts. It is the love mothers give to their children, daughters to fathers, the best and the noblest to the men they admire, trust and adore."

young people approach the altar, to take part in the beautiful ceremony of marriage ; they bring with them all the joy and sincerity of their radiant youth ; they vow to love each other till death do them part. But soon there comes a change ; the brightness of their happiness grows dim ; the faithfulness of their mutual affection wavers, the vows that were to stand firm as a rock for ever, fall to pieces. What has happened ? Nothing ; one hour has followed another ; the young couple are just what they were, only an hour further on life's road. But one hour is a great deal without God. God had no part in their vows, He had no share in their love, and their love ended because it is God only Who never ends.*

But let us turn away from this sad side of the picture, and see what God has done by means of

* *Cf.* R. Kane, S.J., *The Plain Gold Ring* (London : Longmans & Co.) : " No gold can buy love, nor can you conquer it with the sword. It may escape from you beyond the clouds, or it may meet you in a cottage. No eloquence can utter its meaning, and music is only its echo. Love is so great, so mysterious, so divine, that God is love, and all true love, when human, is the likeness of God in a heart." Also Dr. E. G. Gardner, *The Abiding Power of Dante* (New York : The Paulist Press, 1915) : " Love is the noblest and strongest passion of our souls, and men will ever turn to the poet of the *Divina Commedia* as the most inspired revealer of what Francis Thompson calls love's ' possible divinities and celestial prophecies.' As long as chivalry holds any sway in the relations between men and women, the image of Beatrice will rule over hearts from ' the throne which her merits have assigned to her,' and Dante's lyrical farewell to his transfigured guide in the Empyrean heaven will ever thrill the souls of all ' who have understanding of love.' Thus, an eternally significant human gloss is put upon the profound truth enunciated by the Schoolmen : ' Love, by reason of its very nature, hath no limit to its increase, for it is a certain participation in the infinite love, which is the Holy Spirit.' And when the poet attains that spiritual harmony which is the perfect assimilation of the powers of the soul with the Divine Will, the Divine Will itself is revealed as universal, all-pervading, and all-moving love : *L'amor che move il sole e l'altre stelle.*"

the Gospel for the restoration of her rights and privileges to woman.*

The Gospel has given back to her liberty, education, all the civil rights. But it has, in addition, created for her three ministries or services which give her a glorious influence upon the destinies of mankind. The first is the ministry of respect. Respect is a mild and pious fear. When we meet with a man bowed with years and honourable service, a man whose open brow and straightforward address and dignified bearing assure us that he is a virtuous man, we feel, although we may be his equals, a something with regard to him, not a painful restraint, but a something that would make it impossible for us to treat him with the confidence of familiarity: this something is respect. Respect is the voluntary recognition of a dignity which commands us, without needing to give us any order; it enters into all the relationships of men with one another, and the most tender affection never excludes it, however much such affection may moderate and soften it. Without respect, man comes very near to the coarseness of barbarism, he loses sight of the nobility that is within him.† Respect has descended upon us from God Himself, Who has made us to His own image. In God there is a supreme majesty which would be awful and

* *Cf.* Balmes, *European Civilization*, Eng. trans. (Baltimore, 1874), chapters xxiv–xxvii.

† *Cf.* Shenstone: "Deference is the most complicated, the most indirect, and the most elegant of all compliments."

repellent if it stood alone ; but it is united to supreme benevolence, and from this ineffable mingling there results that which attracts without losing anything of its grandeur. It is a reflection of this which rests upon us, and which gives rise to respect.

Now, Gentlemen, we are apt to forget or neglect that part of our heavenly endowment. The abuse of equality, the lowering tendency of vice, the lack of delicacy of mind, always lead us into coarseness in manners and conduct, just as surely as pride inclines us to stupid and ridiculous stiffness and aloofness. Christian civilization had to find and preserve the secret of dignity tempered by grace, and to have always existing a living interpreter of this secret, an exquisite model, inviolable, incomparable, whose very presence in the midst of us should be constantly recalling us to the ideal of the true, pure, sincere and simple man, of the man worthy of himself : and it is to the Christian woman that this sacred office has been entrusted. The Gospel has made of the slave a queen ; it has extricated her from a state of shameful bondage, or of unbridled liberty which was only another form of slavery, to give her a modest yet sovereign influence over public manners and morals. This sceptre, given her by the Gospel, she bears with as much beneficence as glory, and it has stamped upon modern times an indelible colour of decorum and refinement.

That young man grown weary in vice, who no longer believes in anything, not even in pleasure, who has ceased to respect anything, even himself ; that young man approaches and meets the glance of a Christian woman. He sees, living before him, the dignity which he has profaned ; he finds God again in the soul of this woman, he sees His presence revealed in her features. Standing before this mirror of purity, he feels his own misery and vileness. A movement of her eyelid, or of her lips, is sufficient to rebuke and overwhelm him—yes, to rebuke and overwhelm him who felt so sure that he should never tremble before God ! He recognizes a power which compels him to render an account of his life, or at least to hide and disguise its shame ; and if he proves himself incapable of being touched by that tacit reproach, if he despises woman, after having despised all else, this puts the finish to his condemnation ; he no longer belongs to civilized society, he is a barbarian.*

* *Cf.* Lacordaire, *Conferences of Notre Dame*, lxi : " If some young man aroused the tenderness of my heart, and I wanted to persuade him to be chaste, I should say to him : My friend, child of your mother, and brother of your sister ; child of your mother who bore you in the sacred continence of marriage, brother of your sister, of whose virtue you are the witness and guardian, ah ! do not dishonour in your person the great privilege of your manhood ; keep in a frail flesh the honour of your soul, the religious fount whence life springs, and where love blossoms. Prepare for your future couch holy friendship, and embraces which heaven and earth may bless ; be chaste if you will live long, if you will be loved for ever. There exists in the world, between your mother and your sister, between your forefathers and your posterity, a fragile and gentle creature destined by God to be yours. Hidden from every eye, she is nourishing in silence that fidelity which she will promise you ; already she lives for you whom she knows not ; she immolates

The second ministry which the Gospel has created for woman, is that of education.

To whom are we to confide the young child? To whom shall we entrust the task of instilling into this infant soul good dispositions? What hand is delicate, skilful, tender enough to manipulate this little wild beast just born midway between good and evil, who may turn out to be a villain or a saint? No need to seek far. His training began in his mother's womb. Every thought, every prayer, every sigh of that mother flowed like a divine stream over his soul, baptizing it in honour and holiness. The father is powerless to do anything directly in this work. To the mother alone it has been given that her soul should for nine months come in close contact with her child's, and impose upon it pre-

for you her inclinations, she is correcting in herself everything that might one day contravene the slightest of your desires. Ah! guard your heart for her as she is keeping hers for you; do not bring her ruins in exchange for her youth; and as she is sacrificing herself for you by an anticipatory love, offer up to this same love, in the deepest recesses of your passions, a just and generous sacrifice." Also F. Ozanam, *op. cit.*: "In marriage there is not only a contract, there is, above all, a sacrifice, a twofold sacrifice. The woman sacrifices that which God has given her, and which is irreparable, that which was the object of her mother's anxious care—her fresh young beauty, often her health, and that faculty of loving which women have but once. The man, in his turn, sacrifices the liberty of his youth, those incomparable years which never return, that power of devoting himself to her he loves, which is only to be found at the outset of life, and that effort or a first love to secure to her a proud and happy lot. This is what a man can do but once, between the age of 20 and 30—a little sooner, a little later, perhaps never. This is why I say Christian marriage is a double oblation, offered in two chalices; one filled with virtue, purity, innocence; the other, with an untainted love, self-devotion, the immortal consecration of the man to her who is weaker than himself, who was unknown to him yesterday, and with whom to-day he is content to spend the remainder of his life; and these two cups must be equally full, that the union may be holy, and that Heaven may bless it."

dispositions to truth, to gentleness, to goodness, precious germs the culture of which she will complete in the light of day, after having sown them in the mysterious depths of her maternity. The infant appears ; he escapes from that first education which the Gospel gave him before his birth ; but loving arms blessed by that Gospel receive him ; he sleeps tranquilly in his mother's protecting embrace. And as soon as his eyes open, what is the first glance that meets his own ? It is the pure and pious glance of a Christian woman. And as soon as a word, gliding through the tortuous passages of the ear, can reach his soul, who will be the first to utter it ? Who will convey to him the first word, the first appeal of intelligence to intelligence ? Who ? Before his eyes opened to the light of day it was God Who spoke to him ; it is still God Who speaks to him through the medium of a purified and sanctified mother. It is a Christian woman who has succeeded God in the sacred ministry of the first exercise of speech. When Adam heard the first word spoken, and in that moment of awe and wonder his soul leapt up into flame to meet the dazzling splendour that flashed down upon him from the radiant heavens, it was God Who had spoken to him. And when our heart awakens to affection, and our mind to truth, it is beneath the hand, beneath the language, beneath the influence of a mother's love that this marvel is accomplished.

And as childhood passes away, and youth announces itself with its eager striving for uncontrolled liberty; as education becomes more difficult and perilous; when all exercise of authority is felt as a galling yoke, but one refuge remains, if not intact, at least respected. We can still listen to truth spoken to us by a mother beloved of God; her look has not lost all power over us; her reproof still touches us to the quick; and when those weapons fail her, she still has one remaining which we can never resist, her bitter, imploring tears.* By some secret passage, unknown to us, she manages to penetrate into the deepest recesses of our heart, and we are astonished to find her there where we thought ourselves most entirely alone. Hers is indeed a peculiar power, which attests its singular efficacy and its Divine origin!†

* *Cf.* Chateaubriand, *Le Génie du Christianisme* (Paris, 1802): "On her deathbed my mother charged one of my sisters to recall me to a sense of that religion in which I had been educated, and my sister made known to me her wish. When the letter reached me beyond the water, my sister also had departed this life. Those two voices coming up from the grave, and that death which had now become the interpreter of death, struck me with peculiar force. I became a Christian. I did not yield to any great supernatural light: my conviction came from the heart. I wept, and I believed."

† *Cf.* Yvonne Sarcey, *La Route du Bonheur*, Eng. trans. by C. Williams (London: Andrew Melrose): "Woman is the friend, the marvellous friend, who holds man's happiness and the souls of little children in her soft and tender hands. Her part is to spread love around her, to give the whole of herself, so that she may find the echo of all her thoughts and affections again, hidden in the recesses of her husband's, her son's, her daughter's hearts. A woman, by a praiseworthy effort of will, may become author, novelist, professor, or doctor—that is an episode—but the truth, the beacon light on her horizon, is the love she gives and receives." Also T. H. Huxley: "Let us have 'sweet girl graduates' by all means. They will be none the less sweet for a little wisdom, and the 'golden hair'

When the mother finishes, the wife begins. Man is master in his turn ; but his mastery does not prevent his freely surrendering to his wife some command over him. The impetuosity of his youth has calmed down ; he no longer pants for independence as for a good that surpasses all others, and which will give him absolute possession of himself ; he already has full possession of himself, he is sure of his power ; he now returns to the gentleness and the pliancy of childhood, led thereto by the bent of his own will and even by the pressure of life's burden. Friendship is wanting to him, he no longer has any equals ; and who is there that does not want equals ? Who is there that does not stand in need of some one tender enough to command, devoted enough to speak the truth ? Man looks to his wife for that tender devotedness, after having had it from his mother ; he seeks after authority as much as he once feared it. At least, he accepts it without resistance, because love is its well-spring, and from that fathomless source he draws day by day consolations which sweeten the bitterness of advancing years. For life grows stern and grey as it declines towards its eventide ; disappointments and deceptions crowd around us, the dazzling brightness of earthly things becomes dim and tarnished ; the brow is

will not curl the less gracefully outside the head by reason of there being brains within." And Sydney Smith : " A woman's love for her offspring hardly depends on her ignorance of Greek, nor need we apprehend that she will forsake an infant for a quadratic equation."

furrowed with lines of thought and care; and even ambition itself, tired of success, gives forth that cry of deceived vanity:

> Mon coeur, lassé de tout, demandait une erreur
> Qui vînt de mes ennuis chasser la nuit profonde
> Et qui me consolât sur le trône du monde.

Now who will impart that error that is sought, if it be an error? Who but a wife? She it is who gives colour and brightness to all life's events, who finds a balm for its reverses; who has an affectionate welcome ready to greet the disillusioned competitor for honours that have fallen to some other's share, or the baffled thinker who has brought back from science only the martyrdom of doubt and perplexity. Into this shaken and shattered soul the Christian wife infuses detachment and certainty, re-awakening thoughts of the God Who was the joy of his youth and of hers, reviving the spirit's dying life with those pure streams that flow from the sources of Eternity.

If grace fails her in that last scene of human education, all is not lost; all the transfigurations of Christian woman are not yet completed. After having played her part first as mother, then as wife, the Christian woman is reproduced under a new form, that of a daughter. And what man, at the age of sixty, does not learn from his daughter? Where is the man who, never having known God in the days of his vigorous life and active, restless brain, and seeing his child on her

knees day after day before the invisible Majesty of that Eternal God, does not catch some glimpse of the tremendous mystery which is so close to him, does not suspect it (we may say) even from the very ingenuousness of her prayers, breathing as they do all the joy and peace of her heart? Oh the tenderness of God's dealings with us! When we were children it was a mother who first taught us His holy name; later on, in the sweet intimacy of wedded life, the lips of a wife repeat it to the joyous soul of the young man; the daughter whispers it to the old man bowed with years and infirmities, and brings back to him in his decay and decrepitude a revelation always fresh and wholly pure! Heaven alone knows, and will one day proclaim, how many souls have been the fruit of that crowning effort of truth; how many who had not perceived or felt anything of truth's divine beauty have been awakened on a death-bed from their dream of error and delusion, and with their last expiring breath have adored eternal love presenting itself to them under the angelic form of a tenderly-loved daughter.*

* *Cf.* Montalembert, *Memoir of Lacordaire:* "Neither the first fires of the dawn, nor the spring in its first freshness, nor the rose in its first fragrance, nor the first song of the nightingale on an April or May night, no, nothing, nothing at all in nature or in art equals the beauty, the purity, the peerless grace of the child. And nothing, even in religion itself, draws towards God, reveals God, like the faith and candour of the child, like its heart, its voice, its look: that heart so guileless and so eager, which wants to get everything, because it gives its whole self, and to know everything, because it has nothing to hide: that voice so full of sweet and artless music, which speaks to man as man should always speak to God: that

After that, what need has woman of a third ministry? God, however, has committed to her a third: shall I call it the greatest of all? I know not; but I will name it: it is the ministry of charity.

To the Christian woman, as an employment of her leisure and an outlet for the exuberance of her virtues, have been entrusted, by a special delegation, all the poor, all the miseries, all the wounds, all the tears of humanity. It is her

calm, mild, bright and open look which dives without an effort into the secrets of heaven! Their angels always see the face of God. The children themselves are unconscious of it; but they live and bound with joy in this light, in which they grow, full of hopes, potencies, and ravishing feelings. The fathers or grandfathers who love those children and live no longer on any but this love, are betimes bathed in that heavenly light." Also Lacordaire, *Conferences of Notre Dame*, xxxix: "With the first shades of age the feeling of fatherhood descends upon our soul, and fills up the void left by previous affections. Do not imagine that this is a falling-off; next to the glance of God upon the world, nothing is more beautiful than the old man's glance upon his child; a glance so pure, so tender, so disinterested; one which marks in our life the culminating point of perfection, and the closest likeness to God. The body decays with age, perhaps the mind also, but not the soul by which we love. Fatherhood is as much above love as love itself is above friendship. It would be a complete and spotless love, if the return made by the child to the father were the return of the friend to the friend, of the husband to the wife; but such is not the case. When we were children, we were loved more than we loved, and now that we have grown old, we must be content to love children more than it is possible for them to love us in return. We must not complain. Your children follow in your wake, the wake of friendship, the wake of love, ardent paths which do not allow them to requite that hoary passion which we call fatherhood. Man finds in his children the same powerlessness to recompense his love as he himself experienced when a child, and has thus the honour to end in a disinterested love like that of God."

Cf. also Mr W. Lyon Phelps, in *The Ladies' Home Journal* (Philadelphia, Dec., 1922): "The two cherubs in Raphael's Sistine Madonna are irresistibly sweet; they show no fear and no embarrassment. They come to God as little children should come to Him, knowing their best Friend. In contrast to their human baby faces is the countenance of the Son of God, an infant in His earthly pilgrimage, but reflecting the light of the country whence He came."

part, in the name and in the stead of Jesus Christ, to penetrate and explore the vast kingdom of sorrow. To others is given the work of teaching and preaching, to her it is given to succour and console. To others it belongs to represent Jesus Christ by the sword of the word; it is for her to represent Him by the sword of love.*

Shall I, without enlarging upon this subject—for there would be too much to say—shall I bring before you a comparison which will say all? Well, between the pagan and the Christian world there is the same difference as there is between the priestess of Venus and the Sister of St Vincent de Paul. Go to that famous Temple of Corinth, and see woman there; go into one of

* *Cf.* Abbé H. Perreyve, *Biographies*, Eng. trans. by Mrs Sidney Lear in her *Life of Perreyve* from the French (London: Longmans & Co.): "It is the glory of Christianity to have made a reality of that holy love of which ancient philosophy dreamed, but which it had never known or beheld. It is the glory of Christ's religion to have so taught and trained the human heart as to make it thus simultaneously pure and powerful; more and more capable of loving with an ever-strengthening love all that is lovable on earth, while yet capable of loving it all less than God. It is the glory of Christ's religion to have taught a mere child, not a philosopher or a poet, but a simple pious maiden, wellnigh unconsciously to realize the sublimest heights of human wisdom, the perpetual tendency of all love, of all earthly shadows of being and beauty, to flow back to their source—Infinite Beauty Itself; the inevitable return of all 'divine phantoms,' as Plato calls them, to eternal reality. It is the glory of Christianity that it has on all sides opened the way for man to approach God, teaching him to use all his affections, as so many steps whereby to ascend to absolute love. And finally, it is the glory of Christ's religion to have worked this wonder—namely, that the most exalted saintliness, the most superhuman perfection, do not in any way destroy or hinder our pure earthly affections—so that saints do not learn to love God above all things through lack of love to others, but rather by loving all the world better than themselves, and God better than all the world."

our hospitals, and see there the Sister of Charity! Those are the two worlds: choose between them.

That done, Gentlemen, the rest was simple and easy; the dignity of woman being established, the indissolubility and the unity of marriage flowed naturally from it. Nevertheless, so corrupt is man! the indissolubility of marriage has only been maintained by the most continuous and the most strenuous efforts. I might once more cite before the tribunal of the present age, on the one hand the passions of the great, on the other the intrepid pastoral spirit with which the rulers of the Church have maintained the purity and the dignity of European blood. Taking up history and giving it another interpretation than that which has been taught you, I could tell you how much we have suffered for you, and what would have become of you if the immovable barriers of Catholicism had not obstinately checked those unbridled men whose power was great as their lust, and who, impatient of the restraints of Christian morality, set themselves to struggle for a Pagan or Mohammedan freedom from the Gospel law. We have made the cause of purity the entire cause of civilization, because it was and is the cause of woman, the cause of your mothers, of your wives, of your daughters, and, being that, is the cause of the whole human race.* You have not comprehended this. You

* *Cf.* Emerson: "What is civilization? I answer, the power of good women." And Thomas à Kempis: "By two wings is man lifted up from earth—by simplicity and purity."

have accused us of overstepping the bounds of legitimate defence; of extending our hands to the crown, when we did but lay them upon the brutality of flesh and blood. Where would you be if we had not waged that war against lust? Your blood, tainted during so many centuries, would have reached you through the veins of a female slave, instead of from the heart of an honourable and honoured wife. All the holy joys which you have experienced through your mothers, your wives, and your daughters, would have been transformed into the infamous joys of slavery steeped in voluptuousness. You would be Turks, and not Franks.*

Let us give thanks to God, Who has saved us by the courage of our forefathers and by their wielding of the only weapons with which courage could then arm itself. Divorce once banished from the Christian world, polygamy has not even made an effort to show its face there. What European (for I do not class as a European the Turk whose ancestors were transplanted to Constantinople from Asiatic soil), what European would dare to entertain the remotest idea of profaning marriage by establishing polygamy? Who, even in the midst of his debauchery, would not blush to introduce under the same roof the multiplied slaves of his basest and maddest

* *Cf.* Guizot, *Hist. of Civilization in Europe*, chap. i: "European civilization is a fact like any other—a fact susceptible, like any other, of being studied, described, narrated." *Cf.* also A. L. Smith, *Church and State in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1913), pp. 57–100.

egotism, making to each of them the same vows?

Once more, let us thank God and praise Him for having purified the human race without depriving it of its liberty, for having brought into entanglement and discredit all attempted legislation prejudicial to continence, and permitted purity to become the authentic rule of human society.

This work has been carried out at no slight cost. Jesus Christ has not confined Himself to putting it under the protection of His Cross. He has willed to give to the world a woman who was at once virgin and mother, the ineffable model of maternal and of virginal devotedness, and to keep her for ever under the eyes of the world that she might, by her memory and by her worship, inspire it with holiness and purity.*

* *Cf.* Ruskin, *Fors Clavigera*, xli: "I am persuaded that the worship of the Madonna has been one of the noblest and most vital graces, and has never been otherwise than productive of true holiness of life and purity of character." And Lecky, *Rationalism in Europe*, vol. i, chapter iii: "Woman rose, in the person of the Virgin Mother, into a new sphere, and became the object of a reverential homage of which antiquity had had no conception. Love was idealized. The moral charm and beauty of female excellence were fully felt. A new type of character was called into being; a new kind of admiration was fostered. Into a harsh and ignorant and benighted age this ideal type infused a conception of gentleness and of purity unknown to the proudest civilization of the past. All that was best in Europe clustered around it, and it is the origin of many of the purest elements of our civilization." Also Mr W. Lyon Phelps, *loc. cit.*: "What makes the Sistine Madonna the finest picture in the world? It is the look in the Virgin's eyes; a look that no other painter has ever been able to create. Raphael has given to those eyes the beauty of holiness. He had this gift, and it vanished with him. He used it supremely in his Sistine Madonna." And G. F. Watts, R.A.: "From my point of view I should say that the Sistine Madonna in the Dresden Gallery is one of the finest, if

Woman, for the last eighteen centuries, has not ceased to look up to this sublime type of her own regeneration; she has gained therefrom the courage of purity and the courage of love; she has become worthy of the respect which the world needed to have for her; it has been possible for that world to believe her vows; and the veil of servitude, in falling from her brow, has revealed there, stamped on that frail earthly beauty which was once her only charm, the immutable and blood-stained sign of the Cross. Protected by that sacred sign, she has passed through our streets as a living embodiment of decorum and graciousness; she has taken her place, happy and diffusing happiness, in the sanctuary of home; her husband, her sons and her daughters have found brightness and gaiety and contentment by that domestic hearth; she has welcomed strangers there without wounding her honour; family life, ruled and guided by her gentle influence, has become full of joy, peace and virtue; it is sought by every man that is not vicious and depraved in his tastes and desires. The honouring of the affections has taken the

not the finest, picture in the world; it has the highest intellectual qualities as well as artistic genius, inasmuch as it successfully embodies the best and noblest ideas which can be associated with the personality of the Madonna." And Mrs A. B. Jameson, *Legends of the Madonna* (London, 1890): "For myself, I have seen my own ideal once, and only once, attained: there where Raphael, inspired if ever painter was inspired, projected on the space before him that wonderful creation which we style the *Madonna di San Sisto*; for there she stands, the transfigured woman, at once completely human and completely divine, an abstraction of power, purity, and love."

place of the worship of mere flesh and blood.* I unhesitatingly ask, Which of you would not feel more satisfaction, more real contentment in a quarter of an hour passed in the bosom of his family, with his father, his mother, his brothers and his sisters, than in the midst of the most intoxicating pleasures which the world can provide? Who does not make it the dream of his existence to be the head of a family of his own? Who has not said to himself when young: some day, after years of hard work, I shall be able to

*Cf. H. Kenelm Digby, *Mores Catholici:* "An astonishing contrast, says the author of *The Martyrs*, was observable on all sides. The daughters of Lacedæmon, still attached to their gods, appeared on the road with their tunics half open, their free and bold manner, their confident looks; with such they used to dance at the festivals of Bacchus or of Hyacinth. Further on you discovered the Christian virgins chastely dressed, worthy daughters of Helen by their beauty, and more beautiful than their mother by their modesty. . . . The writers of the Middle Ages generally ascribe beauty to an internal excellence of mind. In speculation the ancients had nothing to learn here; the beautiful and the good were expressed by the Greeks conjointly in one term. In fact, a life at enmity with God seems of necessity to produce in the human countenance an expression of deformity which is not found in any of His innocent creatures. The eye naturally turns aside in disgust from the face of the heartless libertine, the avaricious slave of wealth, the epicure, the unfeeling minister of law, the haughty proud man, or the energumen of any of those political theories connected with impiety. The countenance of the moderns is characteristic of their philosophy and of their manners—cold, stiff, affected; it wears a tone of cunning and malice, of duplicity, curiosity, and disdain. There is nothing in it playful, natural, or benign. All travellers remark the graceful dignity of the Tuscan peasant, and the respectful sweetness of expression which belongs to the youth of Ireland." Also Ruskin, *Oxford Lectures*, 1874: "The advance of knightly honour and of kingly wisdom had purified into brightest form the living types of maid and mother among the higher ranks of Europe. Cimabue had women to paint from, pure as snow, and bright as sunshine." And Hazlitt, *Essays:* "What a difference is there between a Madonna of Raphael and a lady of fashion, even by Vandyke: the former refined and elevated; the latter light and trifling, with no emanation of soul, no depth of feeling, soft, careless, insincere, pleased, affected, amiable."

sit down by my own fireside; I shall have a table, a cabinet, and around me all the dear objects of my affection? All of us, as young men, have said that to ourselves; and those of us who have renounced earthly joys that Jesus Christ may be their one and only inheritance, said the same before having received the revelation that a rarer and more perfect good was to be found in a sacrifice far greater than the ordinary life of man can ever demand.

O Christian home! ruled and blessed by the affection, the tenderness, the fostering care of Christian parents, the dear and happy home where from our first hour we drank in with light of day pure love of all things holy, we may grow old, but we must ever return to you with youthful hearts; and were it not that it is Eternity calls us to leave you, we could scarce bear to go forth from you, and no longer watch your shadows lengthening and the sun setting on your cherished walls!*

* *Cf.* Guizot, *Democracy in France:* "The family is now, more than ever, the first element and the last rampart of society." W. S. Lilly, *On Right and Wrong:* "Nowhere is the immeasurable superiority of Christianity to the rest of the world's creeds more clearly manifested than in its ideal and law of matrimony." And King George V.: "The foundations of national greatness are set in the homes of the people; they will only remain unshaken while the family life of our race and nation is strong and simple and pure." *Cf.* also Montesquieu, *Esprit des Lois:* "An admirable thing is the Christian religion: it seems to have no other end in view than happiness in the next world, and yet it constitutes happiness in the present." And N. Hawthorne, *Transformations:* "Christian faith is a grand cathedral with divinely pictured windows. Standing *without*, you see no glory nor can possibly imagine any: standing *within*, each ray of light reveals a harmony of unspeakable splendour."

II

Catholicism and Chastity.

The soul is not alone in man ; it is united to a body ; and the body of man, unlike that of the irrational animal, is not regulated by unchangeable instincts which guide it to the achievement of the end for which it is made. Our whole body is more or less in revolt against the soul which ought to rule and direct it. The soul does, however, sufficiently well govern certain of those springs of action which we call the senses or faculties ; by the power of nature it is able to hold fairly fast the reins of a great part of its administration. But there is one sense or faculty, a singular one, the only one which is not necessary to the maintenance of life, and which, when deprived of its most legitimate functions, sustains no injury and does none either to the action or the development of our organism ; and this faculty, which naturally should be the easiest to control, since it is free to fulfil, or not to fulfil its functions, is the very one which is in perpetual revolt against the soul,—by some mystery which I cannot now explain, of which,

indeed, I may be wholly ignorant, but which is the greatest mystery of our nature, because it touches the most profound depths of the problem of good and evil.

The faculty or sense to which I refer is not only in revolt, it is depraved.

I call that sense depraved which does not trouble itself about its true functions, but acts from an instinct of selfishness foreign to its destiny. This is, evidently, a depravity, a gross injury to the natural order, because nature tends always to a just, determined and efficacious end. Now, the sense of which I speak does not disturb itself about its end, it ignores its legitimate end. What it seeks is itself, a satisfaction independent of all good from which it should derive its utility and sanctity. Whereas all the other senses operate in the direction of life, even when they are abused ; whereas sleep brings us repose, food repairs our strength, our ears hear the words of others, our speech gives utterance to language ; whereas, in a word, all our senses, even in their excess, accomplish something genuine and true, this one, a solitary exception, is always conspiring against our life. It fruitlessly wastes our most precious organs ; it devours without object our most admirable faculties. Have you not met with some of those men who, in the very flower of their age, show signs of decay and decrepitude, who, grown old before their time, wrinkled, hollow-eyed, wasted, wearily drag out the hours

of a miserable existence? What has produced those cadavers? What has robbed those mere boys of their youthful vigour? What has stamped on their faces the marks of shameful excesses, making them old men in all but their actual years? Is it not that sense which is an enemy to the life of man? Victim of its depraving power, the wretched man has lived a solitary life; he has aspired only to selfish excitements, only to those terrible pulsations from the sight of which men and angels turn away in horror.* And, see! he goes on, intoxicated with the wine of death, with a gait that excites scorn, to bear his body to the grave, where his vices will sleep with him, dishonouring his very dust even to the Last Day.

Ah! if this is not a depraved sense, what name shall we give it? A still harsher name; for I add that it is an abject sense. It is an abject sense, because it kills the heart, because it substitutes the emotion of blood for the emotion of the soul. In the course of my life I have come across no small number of young

* "The countenance," also writes Lacordaire, "is the painting of the soul, its permanent reflection in the flesh that it inhabits and vivifies. By it we involuntarily betray ourselves, and our most hidden life follows us everywhere as a reproach or as an honour." *Cf.* Caroline Spurgeon, *Mysticism in English Literature* (Cambridge, 1913): "Francis Thompson's attitude towards the beauty of woman is entirely mystical, and is akin to the view of Plato and of Donne. He shares their belief that love is but the power to catch sight of the beauty of the soul, which shines through and actually moulds the beauty of face and body." And Sir H. von Herkomer, R.A.: "Be good and you will look good; be bad and you will look bad."

men, and I tell you positively that I have never in one single instance met with real tenderness of heart in a young man addicted to debauchery ; I have never met with loving souls except such as were ignorant of this vice or struggled against it. In fact, once we are habituated to violent emotions, how is it likely or possible that the heart, a plant so delicate, which is nourished by dew from heaven and softly stirred by faint breezes ; the heart which suns itself in the remembrance of home delights, of a mother's smile or encouraging word, of the warm touch of the hand of a friend ; the heart whose throbbings are so calm, almost insensible, even because of its sensibility, and for fear lest it should have been broken by a single breath of love had God made it less profound : how (I say) can you imagine that the heart could combine its soft and delicate enjoyments with the gross and delirious excitements of the depraved sense ? The one is selfish, the other generous ; the one lives of itself, the other outside itself : one or the other of these two tendencies must prevail. If the depraved sense carries the day, the heart, little by little, shrinks and withers ; it no longer feels the power of simple joys to attract and enthral it ; it no longer goes out towards others ; and at last it beats only to give the blood its circulation, and to mark the flight of the shameful hours of debauchery. What can be more abject than to destroy the heart of a man ? What

remains of him when his heart no longer lives? Yet the depraved sense does even more: neither vice nor virtue stops short at its effects on one single individual; both the one and the other react always upon society at large. And therefore it is that the depraved sense is the terrible factor in the oppression and ruin of the world.

People talk a great deal about liberty, and I, for my part, speak of it as proudly as any man. For, thank God, there is a liberty that is holy and just; and no word is to be found in human language which has not its legitimate application. God and the devil make use of the same words, and the devil cannot curse one single word, any more than he can curse a single idea, by abusing it. God is the father of liberty; He has blessed it in giving it to man; by the hands of His Church He continually holds up before us its standard, always upright, always honourable. I speak, then, of liberty, and I inveigh against one of its enemies; I denounce this enemy to you from the great tribune of humanity, from where man's duties and man's rights, being sustained the one by the other, have constantly found orators and martyrs. I denounce to you a vile and ignoble despotism, that of the depraved sense against a whole portion of the human race: for the abomination is not confined within the dissolute individual; it goes outside of him to make victims, and what victims!

Ah! Gentlemen, in leaving this assembly, go into one of those streets where misery finds a shelter. Ascend one of those sad staircases, and what a spectacle will meet your eyes! Those faces, so young but so withered and ghastly, were once beautiful: those limbs, which now fill you with horror, were once full of life and vigour: those dishonoured creatures once had brothers and sisters; they have them no longer; they have no longer anything, not even remorse. Who has despoiled them? Who has dragged them down into this misery and shame and even ignorance of their misfortune? Who—do you ask? You know well. Cowardly as well as selfish, the depraved sense does not attack man in his strength, but in his weakness; it will not try to tempt one who can look it in the face; basely, like the worm of the earth, it glides into the bosom of those flowers which the springtime has just opened and which live but for a day. It carries its solicitations to beings who are too weak to defend themselves and only too easy to seduce; it presents itself to them under the disguise of a heart touched by love. The hypocrite hides debauchery under the semblance of love and fidelity; then, the hour passed, after it has destroyed that which can never be repaired, it abandons it, it goes away, deserting the evil it has done, and consoling itself for the disgust which it feels by a disgust which is yet but to come. What oppression is there in the world,

if that is not oppression; and what ruin, if what I am about to say does not count for ruin?

When you look into the history of our country, and see there all the illustrious names of those who were its glory, and then, observing their descendants of to-day, you find some of them bent down beneath the weight of their antiquity, youths whose fathers' swords enlarged the frontiers of their native land and of truth, and who are unable to do anything in defence of either the one or the other; when you see this it is not difficult for you to recognize the cause. Vice has eaten into those families and gnawed away their living fibres. It does not even spare nations. A time comes—and for what people does it not come sooner or later?—when civilized history succeeds to heroic history; character degenerates, bodily vigour diminishes, physical and moral force take flight together, and in the distance is heard the sound of the barbarism which approaches and which looks on to see if the hour is come for ridding the world of this time-worn people. When that hour has struck, when a country feels itself trembling before its threatening doom, what has passed over it? What pestilential breath has dried up its source of life? Always the same, Gentlemen; this national decay and death has ever one and one only accomplice. The nation is degenerated because it has become immersed in the voluptuous indulgence which destroys both body and

soul; it has shed its life-blood drop by drop, and not in crimson floods on the fertile fields of devotion and self-sacrifice, and has drawn down upon itself from Heaven that vengeance which plunges it into servitude and ruin.

Forgive me, Gentlemen, if I do not pursue that thought further; what matters it? But I see many young men here before me. Let them think, each time the tempter attacks them, that it is the enemy of life, of beauty, of goodness, of strength, of glory, that it is the universal and national enemy. Ah! Gentlemen, if a Tartar were to knock at your door and ask you to betray your country, think what your disgust and horror would be. And yet the depraved sense does nothing less than that; the blood which it requires of you, were it not that of Eternity, would still be that of your country and of its future.

Great God! what will the soul do in face of this enemy? Has it been endowed with any strength, has it exercised any against this deadly foe? We have but to consult history; in its pages we shall find our answer.

Well then, the soul has been found to be weak. It has been able to do something for justice, for prudence, for temperance, even for power; it has made Hannibal, Scipio, Cato of Utica, and many others who have had the courage to live and die in circumstances of difficulty and danger; it has made heroes, but

it has not produced chaste men. And seeing itself thus powerless, since it is its undying instinct to live with honour, it has carried its frenzied delirium even to the point of desiring and claiming honour for the depraved sense. It was not contented with liberty; it has not merely asked of the world that the depraved sense should be free and unrestrained, it has demanded that it should be honoured, and the world has consented to this! Even now, Gentlemen, Christianity notwithstanding, the world strives hard to maintain the honour of the depraved sense. A homicide is reprobated by the world; the profaner of the most sacred oaths, the violator of the sanctuary of home, the adulterer, mixes in society, holds his own, unabashed, uncondemned, even courted and, outwardly at least, respected. This is the ground on which the world and the Gospel can never meet in accord and harmony; on this point they must always remain as the poles asunder. The Gospel lays its restraining hands on nothing more firmly than on the depraved sense: the world still upholds it, honouring even to the end dishonour itself.

The soul has not been satisfied with obtaining honour for the depraved sense; it has demanded for it publicity, public recognition. For there is, we know, nothing really great and come to its full growth until it has attained public recognition. Well, incredible as it must seem to you,

the depraved sense has actually aspired to publicity, and by the connivance of the soul has obtained it! I can go no further, Gentlemen . . . Christian speech refuses to lend itself to the recital of those realities on which the sun shone in pagan days; but God has permitted that the pages of Tacitus and Suetonius will, even to the Last Day, make man acquainted with the monstrous history of his own depravity. Do you not remember the account of a certain spectacle offered by the Roman Empire in its decline, that description of Nero showing himself to the Roman people, to the descendants of the great republic? Nero, the master of so many men, charged to represent in his own person what an English orator has so admirably well called the majesty of the great people; Nero, the inheritor of the dominions and glory won by Fabius, Scipio, and many another great general or consul; Nero, robed in the purple decorated with all the splendours amassed by so many virtues and so many ages; Nero, appearing before his country's tombs, before its monuments, in the Forum, surrounded by . . . But how could I describe that scene? And a whole people looked on, but a people already prepared by the most hideous spectacles for this last and worst spectacle.

Will no one come to the help of the soul? Will no one devote himself to inspire it with a little courage and honour? Were there no

philosophers in those times? Oh yes, there were philosophers (I do not say this ironically); there were men of powerful genius who knew how to discover great truths, although they did not discover truth in its entirety. But the philosophers were powerless in the matter of chastity; the depraved sense has even had its philosophy: a philosophy was invented for it! Not only has it had its philosophers, but it has even had its priests.

The priest! That name connotes to us a man grown hoary with age and study, who has explored the regions of truth and traversed all the shores of error, whence he has brought back for the benefit of men wisdom above that of time, and a mien which people come to consult in order to read in it venerable thoughts. Well, the depraved sense has had its priests; it has had priests charged to exercise, as a ministration of holiness, that frightful ministration of depravity.

What do I say? Priests; it has had temples! Temples, great God! When man is fatigued, tired out with the day's toils and cares, and can do no more for this life, he turns aside, he knocks at the door of a temple; he falls upon his knees, he prays, he elevates his soul to God within those walls of His dwelling-place; his soul breathes there the hope and the perfume of a better life: that is a temple. And voluptuousness has defiled it! Lust exhibited itself

upon the altar, and said to the man who came there to find rest from the cruel delusions of life: "I am the last god!"

Do not, however, believe that the human race felt no shame under this terrible yoke of degradation, and that it did not aspire to shake it off. It did so aspire. It had vestals, it knew the word chastity,* it even had some illustrious examples of that virtue, such as the continency of a Scipio on a celebrated occasion. But these were only faint glimmerings of light, only feeble desires, only phantoms of good; good was vanquished by evil. Man, during 4,000 years, remained under the dominion of the depraved sense, until at last the dial of eternity marked an hour, and at that hour angelic voices proclaimed to the world the Divine tidings: *A Saviour is born to you to-day; glory to God in the highest heavens, and peace on earth to men of good-will!*

It remains for us to see the effect of these simple words upon the world, and how they have engendered in that world the virtue of chastity.

* *Cf.* Jules Lemaître: "From my earliest years I was familiar with the legends and the worship of Joan of Arc, like an Athenian brought up in the love of Pallas Athene. Was not Joan called 'The Maid,' as Pallas was? Yes, for she was endowed with the sovereign charm of purity. And we adore purity, even when we do not practise it ourselves; because impurity appears to us the greatest enemy of all beneficent and disinterested action; because we feel the hideous egotism of all merely sensual love, even of that which, in a measure, absolves itself by its very folly and the sufferings it entails; and, last of all, because by giving one's body to none one can give one's soul to all, and because chastity appears to us to be one of the conditions, and one even of the forms of universal charity."

Rome was then the undisputed mistress of the earth ; she had gathered together in her bosom all the vices of the generations she had conquered, and, wishing to mark by some monument the plenitude of her glory and of her religion, she had raised up in her very midst a temple to all the gods, her Pantheon, in which the god of depravity had also its image, its priests, and its incense. Then, one day, some peasants from the valleys of a remote and insignificant country came and stopped at this place in which all the gods of Rome were shut up under the triple protection of time, of victory and of religion. These men, seeing around them all the powers raised for the defence of deified shame and voluptuousness, and having signed upon themselves a sacred sign, knocked boldly with their staves at the door of the Pantheon. It opened before them. There all the ancient gods were ranged ; all the past errors, all the renowned crimes, all reigned there in the splendour of marble, of gold, of ivory. Our peasants had nothing to bring in opposition to all those but a pure heart. And this was in the end the stronger, and it prevailed. Chastity set up in the Pantheon its double sign : first, the Cross, the flesh of man suffering by a voluntary self-immolation ; and by its side, the image of the Spotless Virgin. These two signs announced to the human race that the father of the world was not blood shed in

voluptuousness, but blood shed in pain and sorrow; and that the mother of the world was not fecundity, even legitimate, but virginity—virginity, sister of youth, of beauty, of goodness, of genius, of strength, sister and mother of all virtues, and with them, of the whole world.

The triumph was great and novel. The honour and publicity of depravity were replaced by the honour and the publicity of chastity. But a priesthood is necessary for the maintenance as well as for the propagation of all holy doctrine: and what should the priesthood of chastity be but a virgin priesthood? Catholicism, greatly daring, has ventured to organize such a priesthood, not for a select few destined, like the vestal virgins, to give to the world a rare example of that virtue, but for all without exception, for all at the same time, in all places, in all climes. Catholic doctrine has dared, in this matter, to rely sufficiently upon itself to require absolute continence as the supreme condition of the priesthood, and would confide itself only to innocence that either has been always preserved or has been restored by repentance. No one, in fact, can give what he does not possess; and chastity alone could have the privilege of engendering chastity.

Well, Gentlemen, that was what Catholicism undertook to do. Has it succeeded? Has it

everywhere, among all nations, created a race of chaste priests, who have renounced what for 4,000 years had appeared to mankind to be the indispensable condiment of life ? And remember that Catholicism does not choose for its priests old men in whom the fires of passion have died out ; no, it chooses young men in the flower, in the ardent vigour of their manhood, St John leaning on his Master's bosom, St Paul hurrying towards Damascus, St Anthony carrying the springtime of his life into the desert of Kolsim. Such is the Catholic priest, according to the general rule. The Church seizes a youth, full of vigour, whose heart is full of devotion and whose imagination is attracted. She purifies him by prayer and penance, trains him by meditation, makes him pliant by obedience, transforms him by humility ; and when the appointed day comes, she prostrates him upon the pavement of the sanctuary, consecrates and anoints him : and he is chaste ! Those young men will go to the uttermost parts of the earth, under the shield of their virtue ; they will penetrate into the sanctuary of sanctuaries, the sanctuary of souls ; they will listen to the outpouring of terrible confidences ; they will see all, they will know all ; a thousand tempests will pass over their heart. That heart will remain ardent, like fire, by charity ; firm, like granite, by chastity. It is by this sign that men will always recognize the priest. He may be

avaricious, proud, pharisaical ; and his character will, no doubt, suffer in consequence of these mean vices ; but, nevertheless, as long as the sign of chastity will remain upon his brow God and men will forgive him much : what the people will never pardon will be a fault, sometimes only the shadow of a fault of frailty ; so much, in the eyes of all, will the priesthood and chastity ever be one and the same dignity, one and the same expression of the God Who saved the world upon the Cross !

Thank God, the Catholic priesthood has undergone that trial, during now nearly twenty centuries. Its enemies have watched it unceasingly, in the present time and in the past. They have called the world's attention to some isolated scandals ; but the whole body of the priesthood has remained safe and secure. The faith of attentive generations in a virtue which it has so much tested is not to be shaken ; it conducts to our feet youths of sixteen years, hearts of sixteen years, confessions of sixteen years ; it brings them to us openly, before the eyes of the whole world, and to the amazement of the unbeliever. It brings there the mother and the daughter, the griefs of youth and the griefs of old age, what the husband's ear never hears, what the brother is never told, what the friend has never suspected. By those acts of marvellous confidence mankind proclaims the sanctity of the Catholic priesthood, and the fury

of its enemies will to all time break itself in pieces against that ark which the priesthood carries with it. They will, like Pharaoh's hosts, pursue it even into deep waters, but the crystal of chastity will always rise up as a wall between us and them ; they will curse that divine fruit which is born within us and protects us, but they will curse it in vain, because the curse which falls upon virtue is like the malediction which fell upon the Cross of Jesus Christ two days before the Resurrection.

Catholicism has produced a chaste priesthood. But even a greater marvel has been wrought by Catholic teaching. After all, the priest is chosen, prepared, and consecrated ; but the heart of woman, the least disposed, the least shielded of all human hearts, Catholicism will also purify. It will create holy generations of Christian women, living free in the midst of the world, confided to their own keeping, guardians of their own morals and of general morals, taking a new place of influence and authority in society, and causing to be born of respect and reverence a love such as was never known to antiquity.

But, Gentlemen, I must hasten on ; I am eager to come to you, young men, the last and the divinest fruit of chastity. For you are less guarded and protected even than woman by nature and society ; a liberty great as your desires has been left to you. You can do all

against yourselves, and with impunity often for a long time. Yet the Cross has touched you, too ; the Spotless Virgin has appeared unto your heart which is intoxicated with the elixir of life : these two teachers have taught many of you the blessed mortification of continency, and religion has surrounded herself with you as with a young guard of honour, which defends her better than the bosoms of her martyrs or the sword of her doctors. Not all of you, it is true, have retained that virginal splendour ever since your soul unfolded itself in the first radiance of God's light ; many of you had lost their baptismal innocence, had felt the sting of passion and succumbed to it : manhood has restored to them that of which youth had deprived them. Others are still struggling against the poison infused into their veins ; they lift up to God their supplicating desires ; they are learning in the combat itself, by knowing better the infirmity of their nature, to discern in virtue the touch which alone can heal and renew.

Such, Gentlemen, is the work of Catholicism —a chaste priesthood, chaste women, chaste youth—in the midst of a world which doubtless has not ceased to be corrupt, but which, even in those who revolt against the yoke of sanctity, still feels Catholic influence, and, in regard to chastity, permits no man of sense to confound the general state of morals and manners in

Christendom with that in pagan Greece and Rome.*

* *Cf.* Montesquieu, *op. cit.*: "To say that religion is not a restraint because it does not always restrain, is equally absurd as to say that the civil laws are not a deterring agent. The question is not to ascertain whether it would be better for a certain individual or a certain nation to have no religion than to abuse that which they have; but to know which is the lesser evil—that religion should be sometimes abused, or that there should be none at all among mankind."

Also W. E. Gladstone, *Rectorial Address at the Glasgow University*: "When scepticism alleges that our advanced morality (such as it is) is really the work, not of Christianity, but of civilization, require it to show cause why this advanced morality has never grown up except under the aegis of the Gospel; why the old civilizations were one and all smitten with decay and degenerated in moral tissue even before they lost their intellectual vigour. When you are assured that marriage and the laws of purity are safe, ask how it was that the ancients in these capital respects marched continually downwards, and that only in Christian times and lands have these laws come to and maintained authority."

III

Rationalism and Chastity

Since the establishment of Catholicism there have sprung up three other doctrinal systems by the side of it: Islamism, Protestantism, and Rationalism. I do not name the Greek schism (although it occupies a considerable place in the world), because the Greek schism is nothing more than Catholic doctrine in a state of petrifaction.

Six centuries had passed away since the first preaching of the Gospel. Then, in a land separated from the rest of the globe by sandy deserts, between Egypt and Palestine, in the midst of a race which had descended from Abraham and preserved the glorious tradition of that great patriarch, in Arabia, a man was born. He came late to found a religion; for he came after Christ, when already the entire Roman Empire obeyed the Cross, and the branches of this vigorous tree waxed strong from Syria to Egypt and to Abyssinia. He feared not, however; he knew the Gospel: on reading it, he saw the moral inferiority of his

country divided between idolatry and the memories of Abraham; and, without accepting the yoke of Christ, disdaining the rôle of heresiarch as well as of disciple, he set himself up between the old world which was expiring and the new world which was springing up on all sides, hoping to crush them both and upon their double ruin to constitute himself as the last teacher and unique master of the human race. He founded the Islamism which has been properly called a heresy on account of its resemblances to the Christian system, but which differs essentially from Christianity by the absolute denial of the Trinity and of the Divinity of Christ, and which is in principle only a traditional Theism built up from the forms of belief and the morals of the patriarchal epoch. The name of Abraham is everywhere in the Koran. It was Abraham whom Mohammed would substitute for Jesus Christ; it was by Abraham that he hoped to overthrow both Christianity and idolatry; Abraham was to him what the early Christian centuries have since been for Luther. Mohammed turned back over the past, and chose there a point which he regarded as the vantage point of time and of truth.

He succeeded; he founded his religion, and after twelve hundred years many nations still date their history from his victorious hegira. But what has resulted for morality? What,

as regards chastity, has been the fruit of that memorable foundation? There is no need for me to tell you, Gentlemen; you know the frightful depravity of the Mohammedan people. Their morality is below that of Greece or Rome; they live, with the sanction of their law, in the most licentious polygamy; they have degraded woman to a servitude and shame to which pagan society had never abased her; they allow themselves excesses of which Christian decency forbids the mention. And do not believe that Mohammed intended that. No, Mohammed did not intend it; he, like every other founder, designed to elevate his nation, and in certain respects he has succeeded in doing so. It is manifest that it was his intention and his pride to call back into life the transitory civilization of the Hebrew patriarchs; Mohammedan polygamy, as well as the spirit of hospitality which breathes in the Koran, indicates as much. He had not wished to corrupt Arabia; he desired to regenerate it, to lead it back to the times of its celebrated and pious ancestors. Why has he not done this in reality? Because he could not. His heart was not pure enough, nor was his arm strong enough, to impose holiness and chastity upon the populations he aspired to govern. The Arab, like an untamed steed, obeyed his master well when that master urged him with the pressure of the spur that promised him victory; he dashed forward, full of fire, his

haunches pliant, his mane erect, to bear down nations under his powerful tramp : but when it was needful to put on the curb of purity, he champed in pieces the rings of steel, and it has been found that the doctrine which drove him to the conquest of the world was a doctrine less finely tempered than his muscles and his breastplate.

I say only those few words. Look into the Koran ; you will not find therein any sign of calculated and deliberate depravity. Polygamy was a patriarchal tradition ; and as to the vile recompenses which, it is said, Mohammed promised in the other world to his faithful followers, if such is the sense in which we must take them, it is a sense too deeply buried in Islam for us to believe that corruption was the real object or even the avowed means of the founder. Corruption has, by the force of things, risen in the form of scum to the surface, as it always will come to the surface of all human doctrine. Notwithstanding the blood of the Gospel infiltered into our veins, what energy has it not been necessary for ourselves, Christians, to put forth against Mohammedan morals, much more even than against the armies of Islam ! More than one knight of the Crusades, in bringing back his arms from the East, has also brought back changed morals ; and Frederick II, in the torments of his ambition, let fall the words, " Saladin is blessed ; he has no Pope to hinder

him from doing what he likes " ; it was the cry of the Arab and of the Turk, the cry of Islamism, which came from his imperial throat in favour of morals which he had seen and coveted.

We escaped from the menace of Mohammedanism, although with difficulty ; and some centuries later Catholic society, always more or less tormented, was face to face with another celebrated and disastrous period. I will not describe to you the troubles of the Church in those times ; our fathers have described them with courage and single-mindedness. The Church has no interest in hiding, I do not say her faults, but the faults of her children. She is strong enough to avow their weaknesses.*

* *Cf.* Bossuet, *Variations :* " For many ages the reformation of ecclesiastical discipline had been desirable." And also Bossuet's *Meditations on the Gospel :* " The prodigious revolt of Lutheranism has been a visible punishment of the enervation of the clergy. . . . God has visited upon our fathers, as He continues to visit upon us, all the laxness of past centuries, beginning with the earliest times, in which evil customs, contrary to rule, began to prevail. Let us take heed, all of us who are superiors. We must bear the penalty for all the scorned canons, all the abuses authorized by our example." Erasmus wrote : " We are being punished, it seems, for our sins. No annoyance will, however, withdraw me from the Church, but at times I have almost felt provoked to it. I will not assail the mother by whom I was washed at the font and fed with the Eucharist. . . . Some men are wicked, but that is no reason to give up our belief in the Church. . . . I will not join Luther until I see he is on the side of the Church ; but if there is to be a cleavage and the Church is torn in two, I will stand on the rock of Peter until the return of peace."

Cf. also Bishop J. L. Spalding, *Religion, Agnosticism and Education* (Chicago, 1903) : " To insist upon the failures of religion and to ignore its successes is to be unfair. Montesquieu declares that this is a poor way to argue against religion. ' If I were to recount,' he says, ' all the evils which have been done by civil laws, by monarchy, and by republican government, I should tell the most frightful things.' " And L. Elliott Binns, *Erasmus the Reformer* (London, 1923) : " The Church is not a dead machine, but a living organism ; a surgical operation should be resorted to only

Anyhow, there was a man who willed to reform us; and why not? We ourselves preach reformation to the world. In the cloisters, upon episcopal thrones, in the chair of Peter, in the first ranks of saints, I see reformers sitting. Reformation, then, is a thing of the Church, and the title of reformer is, after that of founder, the most glorious that she extends to her children. Sometimes even the reformer counts for as much as the founder; St Bernard is worthy to stand by the side of St Benedict.

Now, in the sixteenth century, in a corner of Saxony, there was a man who had the idea of reforming us. And certainly he had more right to such an idea than any man of his time; for he had received from God a power of eloquence that flowed copiously alike from his lips and from his pen; his was an ardent soul capable of attracting by love as well as of subjugating by doctrine; his character lacked nothing that was necessary to assure the success of his teaching. Besides, he was a monk; the Church had taken him out of the world, covered him with a religious habit, prostrated him in sackcloth and ashes; he had experienced the salutary and ennobling yoke of obedience and the consoling joys of humility; a generous nature and powerful grace had combined to prepare and fit him for giving

"when the organism is incapable by its own vitality of throwing off that which is incommoding it. In removing an apparently obsolete portion of the faith there may be real danger of permanently injuring the health of the whole body."

to others all the gifts of heaven. What more? A man of genius, an orator, an author, a monk; so many powers and so many glories in that young hand! Let us leave him to do his work.

He has finished . . .; but where do I find him again? No longer by the sacred hearth of the monastery, but by the fireside of a vulgar house, his legs stretched out in front of the domestic fire, a wife beside him!* He who was twice consecrated chaste, by the unction of the priesthood and by the vows of the cloister; he who had been anointed by the Church, and who had not found the Church pure enough for him —behold him married! And it was not a case of him only. His language has broken open the portals of the old convents of Germany; it has disturbed the long-guarded chastity of the aged and the still purer chastity of the young man; it has dragged from the tomb all the desires of the flesh. God, by means of Catholic teaching, had not only trained His priests to absolute continence; He had inspired in a thousand others the taste for it, and moved them to practise it. He had prepared for each misery in the world a virginity which should be to it a mother and a sister. Luther has destroyed all. He has withered the priesthood at its very roots, by taking from it the marks of Jesus Christ which it should, by means of chastity, bear in its

* "The Lord," Luther explained, "has suddenly and wonderfully thrown me into marriage with that nun, Catherine Bora."

crucified flesh. He has given back to the world the privileged souls which the Gospel had drawn from it; he has unpeopled the solitudes where prayer watched under the guard of mortification. All that heart, all that genius, all that eloquence, all that power of soul, all those plans of reformation, have ended, not in a universal deluge, but in universal marriage!

The phrase is not mine, Gentlemen; it is Erasmus's. You all know Erasmus. He was at that time the first scholar in the world. When the tempest came which was to shake Europe and the Church, this worthy man had the courage to remain a scholar; and in the end he went into retirement at Freiburg, having refused to devote his words and his pen to the service of error. He witnessed, before his death, fruits of the Reformation which he had never looked for, and he revenged himself upon it by the words that have just escaped me.*

* *Cf.* Erasmus, *Letters:* "It was thought that Luther was the hero of a tragedy; but, for my part, I regard him as playing the chief part in a comedy, which has ended, as every comedy ends, in a marriage." Erasmus had predicted: "If ever this monk Luther takes a wife, the whole world and the devil himself will laugh." And Henry VIII, of all men, wrote to Luther: "You may well be ashamed to raise your eyes to me. I wonder you can raise them to God or look at any honest man, when you, an Augustinian monk, at the instigation of the devil, the suggestions of the flesh and the emptiness of your own understanding, have not been ashamed to violate, with your sacrilegious embraces, a virgin devoted to the Lord. Such an act in pagan Rome would have caused the vestal to be buried alive and you to be beaten to death."

Cf. also Canon J. B. Mozley, *Essays*, vol. i: "The stars were unusually brilliant one evening when he and Catherine were walking in the garden. 'What a brilliant light!' said Luther, as he looked upward; 'but it burns not for us.' 'And why are we to be excluded from the kingdom of heaven?' asked Catherine. 'Perhaps,' said

Mohammed had founded, Luther had reformed; the eighteenth century aspired to a work yet more complete, to the most magnificent work (if I may say so) that has been attempted by man—the transformation of humanity. Up to that time man's life and conduct were influenced and supported by religion: the men of the eighteenth century designed to destroy that dependence, and to establish everywhere the reign of pure reason. Have we not received from God, they said, a reason which emanates from His own? Have we not received from Him a conscience which is the reflection of His eternal justice? As an intelligent and moral being, is not man complete, free, endowed with truth, capable of knowing good and evil, able to direct his own course? And if so, what need is there for all those religions which contend for the honour of securing his adhesion to truths which they reciprocally anathematize? Whilst reason is peaceful, and is one and the same in all times and places, religions increase in each age the long list of their varieties, and turn the world into a battlefield; Pagans against Christians, Protestants against Catholics, Lutherans against Calvinists; Greeks, Armenians, Mohammedans, Hindoos, races without number, fretting and agitating humanity. Is it not time to give unity to mankind? Such was

Luther, with a sigh, 'because we left our convents.' Catherine: 'Shall we return then?' Luther: 'It is too late to do that.'"

the idea of the eighteenth century ; and, by rare fortune, there met together to put it into execution a galaxy of superior minds—poets, historians, romance-writers, moralists, lawyers, men with every kind of literary and scientific equipment, capable of destroying and of building up. Never before were so many minds seen to be brought together in one accord ; and the fortunate age which produced them, on seeing their concord and their ardour, was able to assure itself that a really providential work had been entrusted to it, and that it would soon witness the chimerical accomplishment of that task.

Respect, Gentlemen, respect those hopes of the human mind, those bold promises, that daring navigation in the long course of the unknown regions of truth. Respect those Argonauts, who start in full sail to pass beyond the pillars of Hercules of humanity, and who already see rising before them the fortunate isles of the future.*

* *Cf.* Lacordaire, *Conferences of Notre Dame*, xi, Eng. trans. by Mrs Sidney Lear : " Do you know what you are about when you pronounce sentence against Christianity in the name of reason ? I will tell you. You have studied some rudiments of science, some Latin and Greek ; you have picked up some notions about physics and mathematics, read some fragmentary ancient and modern history ; you have enjoyed turning over the pages of more or less clever attacks upon Christianity, and with this little stock-in-trade, carried by men from twenty to twenty-five years old, you plant yourself boldly in the face of Jesus Christ and His Church, in order to show them that you consider them to be without the pale of human reason. Do you think that Christianity, which is certainly older than you, has read more, has seen more, has lived with mankind more than you—do you think it might not with quite as much right look upon *you* as without the pale of reason ? " And Prof. A.

Meanwhile, what is the Church doing? The Church seems to grow pale. Bossuet no longer pronounces the oracle; Fénelon sleeps in his harmonious memory; Pascal has broken his geometrical pen in the tomb; Bourdaloue no longer speaks before kings; Massillon has thrown to the winds of the past century the last sounds of Christian eloquence; in Spain, in Italy, in France, in all the Catholic world, no powerful voice answers to the lamentations of the outraged Christ. His enemies increase daily. Thrones mingle in the conjurations. Catharine II, from the steppes of the Crimea, writes tender letters to the fortunate geniuses of the moment; Frederick II shakes hands

Rahilly, *Faith and Facts* (London: C.T.S., 1918): "You might imagine that Gibbon lost his faith owing to his investigations into the origins of Christianity. Not at all. It certainly was not historical research which made him 'suspend his religious inquiries' at the mature age of—guess!—seventeen. Renan, too, might conceivably have lost his faith in Christianity owing to his knowledge of Semitic religion and philosophy. Yet here, also, we find that before he ever encountered the facts on whose presentment his reputation is based, he had ceased to believe." *Cf.* also Prof. G. Saintsbury, *Miscellaneous Essays* (London, 1892): "Perhaps all the defects of M. Renan may be set down to the weakness of his reasoning power, which for a professed philosopher is remarkable, and is scarcely less obvious, than that of Victor Hugo." And Jules Lemaître, *Les Contemporains* Eng. trans. by A. W. Evans (London, 1921): "As Macbeth murdered sleep, so Ernest Renan, twenty times, a hundred times, in each of his books has killed action, has killed peace of mind and the security of the moral life."

Cf. too Prof. Saintsbury, *Short Hist. of French Lit.* (Oxford, 1884): "Voltaire's habitual inaccuracy, and the inferiority of his mind in strictly logical faculty and in commanding range of view, disabled him from really serious contribution to philosophy of any kind." F. Brunetière, *Manuel de l'Hist. de la Litt. Franç.* (Paris, 1897): "Voltaire never gave himself the time or prosecuted the studies required for the adequate examination of great questions." And E. Faguet, *Voltaire* (Paris, 1912): "There was no one more capable than Voltaire of hypocrisy, of deceit, of lies,"

with them between his victories; Joseph II comes to visit them, and deposits the majesty of the Holy Roman Empire upon the threshold of their academies. What do you say of it? What do you say of the silence of God? What is He doing? Already the age marks the day of His fall; hearken, one o'clock, two o'clock, three o'clock . . . to-morrow morning they will bury Christ. Ah! they will surround Him with great funeral pomp; they have prepared a magnificent procession; the cathedrals will be in it, they will march two by two, like the great streams that flow to the ocean, to disappear with one last noise. Once more, what say you of it, Gentlemen? It is true, God keeps silence; He makes Himself little. He had taken all from His Church, all, except Himself; all, except the triumph of error against itself. Until then, God had never allowed to error its complete development; He had always destroyed it at one time or another before it became dominant.* This time He has let it work even to the end. Let

* *Cf.* Lacordaire, *Conferences of Notre Dame*, xliii: "When the Emperor Julian attacked Christianity by that stratagem of war and violence which bears his name, and, absent from the empire, had gone to seek in battles the consecration of a power and popularity which he thought would achieve the ruin of Jesus Christ, one of his familiars, the rhetorician Libanius, on meeting a Christian, asked him derisively and with all the insolence of assured success, what the Galilean was doing; the Christian answered: He is making a coffin. Some time afterwards Libanius delivered the funeral oration of Julian over his mutilated body and vanished power. What the Galilean was then doing He does always, whatever may be the power and the pride men may oppose to His Cross." Also St Ignatius of Loyola: "Do everything as if God did nothing, and leave everything to God as if He did everything."

us wait in our turn, and, even before the end, let us observe what effects the triumph of pure reason had upon morals.

What became of chastity, that virgin evoked from the tomb by Catholic doctrine? How did she fare? Behold the palace of the Most Christian Kings; in the chamber where St Louis slept Sardanapalus reposed. Stamboul visited Versailles, and found itself at home there. Women, lifted up from the lowest dregs of the world, played with the crown of France; descendants of the Crusaders fawned in the dishonoured ante-chambers, and, as they passed, kissed the reigning robes of a courtesan, bearing from the throne to their homes contempt for the holy laws of marriage. Instead of the soc and the sword, the depraved youths knew only how to handle sarcasm against God and shamelessness against man; they indulged in saturnalia seasoned with a degree of impiety that was unknown to the familiars of Nero. Below them crawled along the bourgeoisie, more or less imitating that royal corruption, as the lesser wild animals follow after the lions and other powerful kings of the wilderness to lick up a share of the blood that has been spilt.*

At last the day of God dawned. The old Frankish people revolted at so much ignominy. It stretched out its right hand; it shook that

* *Cf.* Bishop J. L. Spalding, *Glimpses of Truth*: "To an ape the most attractive thing in nature is an ape." And Voltaire, *Letters*: "If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent Him."

rotten society, and cast it to the ground with one shock, to the puerile astonishment of all those kings who flattered pure reason! The scaffold succeeded the throne, gathering without distinction all that was brought to it, kings, queens, the aged, children, young women, priests, philosophers, innocent and guilty, all enveloped in the solidarity of their age and in its triumph over Jesus Christ.* A last scene completed the reprisals of God. Pure reason willed to celebrate its nuptials, for it had celebrated on the scaffold only its betrothment; it determined to advance, to press forward even to its nuptials. On the 10th of November, 1793, the doors of this cathedral were opened by its all-powerful orders; an innumerable crowd overran the nave and chancel, conducting to the high altar the divinity which had been preparing for them. Shall I pronounce its name? Antiquity had had images which exposed depravity to the worship of the nations; here it was the reality, the living marble of nude animate flesh. I hold my peace, Gentlemen; I leave that great people to adore the last divinity of the world, and to celebrate without mysteries the immortal nuptials of pure reason.

Foundation, reformation, transformation—Mohammed, Luther, Voltaire—all ended by

* *Cf.* A. Vermeersch, S.J., *Tolerance* (London, 1913), page 168: "The French Reign of Terror in less than three years was responsible for a larger number of victims than all the Inquisitions put together in three centuries."

bringing about the same result, the more or less complete overthrow of chastity. Whoso touches Catholic doctrine, touches the sacred arch of virtue. Tell me, Gentlemen, has not the poison of impurity glided into possession of you with the poison of unbelief? Has rationalism ever served you against your passions? Has it not excused and flattered them? It is Catholic doctrine which has made you chaste; it is the abandonment of it which has marked the epoch of your fall; and every time when, touched by your condition, you aspire towards a purer day, to whom (I ask you) are your hopes addressed, and to whom have you recourse? You turn your eyes towards the tabernacles, of which you have tender reminiscences; you return to Catholic doctrine, to its priests, to its confessional, to its holy table, to all its pious mysteries, the efficacy of which you have experienced.*

* *Cf.* Card. Bourne: "As has been said over and over again in all our controversies with those who are not Catholics, it is the Mass that matters; it is the Mass which separates us from our fellow-countrymen." And Mr G. K. Chesterton: "Everything in the Catholic Church which was condemned by the modern world has now been brought back by the modern world, and always in a degraded form. The Puritans rejected art and symbolism, and the Decadents brought them back, with all the old appeal to sense and with a new appeal to sensuality. The Rationalists rejected supernatural healing, and it was brought back by Yankee charlatans, who not only proclaimed supernatural healing, but forbade natural healing. Protestants abolished the confessional, and the psychoanalysts have re-established it, with all its dangers and none of its safeguards. Protestants complained that the family was insulted by monasticism, and they have seen the family shattered by bureaucracy. And, having objected to fasts being appointed for anybody during any exceptional period, they have bred up vegetarians and teetotalers who are trying to impose a fast upon everybody for ever."

IV

Catholicism and Humility

The first and most natural object of man's knowledge is himself. It is upon himself that his first observation falls, it is unto himself that his attention returns unceasingly. From every other thought he may, to some extent, detach himself, even from the thought of God, even from that of the universe and its inexhaustible wonders ; but never can he succeed in separating himself from himself. And this is why the sentiment man entertains with regard to himself, the view of himself which is born and fostered within him, is assuredly of the highest importance. For he will master every other sentiment, however dominant and insistent it may be, because he will be able to withdraw himself from the objects which arouse it ; but the sentiment he has concerning himself, the feeling corresponding to the watchful attention which he so unceasingly concentrates upon himself—of this sentiment he will never rid himself for a single day, for a single instant. And as sentiment influences the will, and the will is the mainspring

of action, you will understand how interesting and useful it is to know what man feels as to himself.

With awe, then, I open the heart of man to ascertain what sentiment he cherishes with regard to himself. To do this I need not go far ; I have, alas ! but to open my own heart to discover what is passing in that of my fellow-man. I look into the heart of man and I find that he loves himself. He loves himself, and for this I do not blame him ; why should he hate himself ? But not only does he love himself, he loves himself more than any other, he loves himself above and beyond all else in the world, he loves himself exclusively, he loves himself even to pride, even to desiring to be the first and the one and only first. Let us look into our own hearts, and say what we find there. Whether we have been born in a prince's palace or in a labourer's cottage, from the first moment when we were conscious of active intelligence and moral perception stirring within us we have not ceased to aspire to the exaltation of pre-eminence. It is said that Cæsar, on one occasion, passing through some small Alpine village, and perceiving that there was an agitation going on there over the choice of a chief, halted a moment before the spectacle. His captains were amazed at the tumult. " Are there here also," they asked, " disputes and struggles for primacy ? " And Cæsar, like the great man he was, said to them :

"I would rather be first in this little hamlet than second in Rome." That is the true cry of the human heart. Wherever we are, whatever we are, we would fain be foremost. The artists who reproduce with pencil or graver, orators creating thoughts in the minds of the multitude, the general commanding his battalions and promising them victory, ministers settling the affairs of empires, kings beneath their purple—we all aspire to primacy, and to a sole primacy. We are only content when, measuring our surroundings with a glance, we find space, and beyond that space, as far off as may be, a kneeling world ready to worship us.*

A young man has received from nature handsome features; he has fair hair, blue eyes, a fine forehead, an amiable smile. Fragile creature that he is, you think that he aspires but to the destiny of a flower? You deceive yourselves. He also dreams of pre-eminence and domination; with those feeble attractions which fascinate hearts, he seeks to render himself an ephemeral object of praise from those lips of men which tell of prestige and glory that vanish the instant they are born.

* *Cf.* Bossuet, *Traité de la Concup.*: "The same passion of ambition it is that sets nations at war with each other and that moves a man to overthrow society that he himself may have the topmost place." And La Rochefoucauld, *Maxims*: "If we did not flatter ourselves, the flatteries of other people could never hurt us. Flattery is like false money, and if it were not for our own vanity could never pass in payment. We fancy sometimes that we dislike flattery, when, alas! that which we dislike is the awkwardness of the flatterer." Also Bishop J. L. Spalding, *Glimpses of Truth*: "Flattery is the politeness of contempt."

In a word, we aspire to pre-eminence, even through the potency of nothingness. I will not further insist on this truth ; for it is a commonplace, and, by God's grace, I have an aversion from what is commonplace.*

But see what happens. When man, thus infatuated with himself, looks around him, does he find that which corresponds to the illusions of his pride ? No ; he finds quite the contrary ; he finds ranks formed in which he has no place : the hierarchy of birth, the memorials of an ancient glory which has traversed centuries, and which, upon the brow of the man without merit, shine by the power of history ; the hierarchy of talent, of the talent which nature has distributed capriciously, and which, in spite of all our protestations, stands above us, and offers magnificent insults to our self-love ; the hierarchy of material wealth, of riches acquired by virtue, vice, or ability ; hierarchies of every sort and kind, based upon laws, traditions, upon the needs and claims of society, and reposing upon abysses that will engulf the disturbers who attack that which time has built up. And beholding all that, man, a mere cypher, fallen from nothingness into the midst of all those thrones which

* *Cf.* Montalembert, *op. cit.* : " Lacordaire one day said, ' By the grace of God I have a horror for what is commonplace,' and he was never more mistaken in his life." Also Robert Lynd, *Solomon in All His Glory* (London, 1922) : " Most remarks that are worth making are commonplace remarks." And Goethe : " Everything that is wise has been thought already ; we can only try to think it once more."

defy him, becomes indignant; in his irritated pride he hurls defiance at the whole world of his surroundings, like the dying Ajax threatening with the poor splinter of his broken sword the majesty of the gods; hatred of the superiority to which he must submit becomes united in his heart with hatred of the equality which he repels. Is it not Mohammed who has somewhere said:

"Equals! Mohammed has long had none"?

And do you not know that the modern Cæsar, when he received in Egypt from a member of the Institute a letter which commenced with the words, "My dear colleague," crushed it in that hand which had countersigned the announcements of so many victories, and repeated with disdain: "'My dear colleague'! —What a style!" In vain, Gentlemen, have we decreed equality in charters; pride only ratifies its proclamation in order to humble those who are higher than ourselves, and not to lift up those who are lower. Hatred of superiority only calls to its side as deep a hatred of equality and a profound contempt for inferiority. These are the three legitimate children of pride. If only a real loftiness of desire and purpose reigned in this heart captivated and enthralled by the craving for pre-eminence! But no; pride, unfortunately, too often and too easily leagues itself with all that is base, ignoble, degrading. Nay, more, a miserable kind of deaf

and dumb and blind baseness actually lives in pride, making for it torture-chambers more terrible than the most cruel tyrants could ever have devised. That conscience, so delicate, so sensitive, so faithful as long as it reigns upon its appointed throne, sells itself, buys itself; humiliates itself to become great; it begs on its knees the purple which is to cover its nakedness; it accepts contempt in order to acquire the right to inflict it.

There, Gentlemen, you have man as he really is, the sentiment he harbours in regard to himself, and the normal consequences of that sentiment. Now I maintain that indisputably this is a false, an inhuman, an unfortunate sentiment. It is a false sentiment: for it is impossible that everybody should be first, and consequently it could not be the will of nature or of Providence (whatever name be given to that mighty power) to call every one of us to a primacy among our fellows. If primacy and priority were our end, our vocation and destiny, then one single being only would exist, and even he would not be the first, because that there may be a first there must be some last. It is an inhuman sentiment: because it supposes the degradation of all who do not attain to pre-eminence, and contempt for all those who are not lucky or strong enough to secure for themselves an exalted position. Finally, it is an unfortunate sentiment: for it is contradicted by

all life's stern realities. Pride makes boundless demands, and life gives but little, and gives that little the more cruelly in that it favours a few and then exhibits these few fortunate ones to the pantingly ambitious but unsuccessful claimants who asked and obtained not. Pride tells a poor artisan that he has only to look about him and all that he wants will come to his hand ; and the unhappy man, with his mind filled with a notion of his dignity and importance, goes into the street to look for employment which he does not always find, and which he dishonours in advance by his vices. Ah! what happiness, think you, is to be found in so poignant a contradiction between what we feel and what really is ?

Catholic doctrine proposes to effect a radical change in the sentiment which we naturally entertain concerning ourselves. It attacks that sentiment which appears to be indestructible and inseparable from our very nature ; it has claimed to form for us another of a contrary kind. I admire a doctrine which does not fear to upset man's very being, which aims not only at tearing up by the roots a sentiment so deeply and firmly established within him, but at creating in its place another sentiment absolutely opposed to the original one, and designs to enthrone this new creation in the very depths of his heart. Man lived on pride, he will live on humility. And what is humility ? Humility

consists in our voluntarily accepting the place that has been marked out for us in the hierarchy of beings, in keeping ourselves within our own bounds, not reaching out to things above us, but tending discreetly to abase ourselves. Pride sought to ascend: humility seeks to descend. Pride implied hatred of superiority, hatred of equality, and contempt for inferiority: humility cherishes love and respect for the superiority that is in those whom Providence has made our superiors, love and respect for our equality with those whom Providence has made our equals, and love and respect for inferiority not only in those whom Providence has made our inferiors, but even, and absolutely, in ourselves.* Pride aspired to be first, humility aspires to the lowest rank. Pride must needs desire to reign, humility desires to serve. Humility, this incredible sentiment, was unknown to the pagan world, they had not so much as a name for it: Christianity has given it a name, a history, and a glory.†

* *Cf.* A. C. Plowden, *Autobiography of a Police Magistrate* (London, 1903): "Man for man, the prisoner standing before me is probably neither better nor worse than myself. Had circumstances been different our positions might have been reversed." And Mr Justice Darling, *Scintillae Juris* (London, 1922): "The chief difference between prisoners and other people is, perhaps, captivity." And the London Magistrate, Mr J. R. Cairns, *The Loom of the Law* (London, 1922): "The West End is an underworld in evening dress. Life is less exotic down East. Our dirt is only skin-deep." Also Sir Hall Caine, in the *Illustrated Sunday Herald* (July 31, 1921): "No man born of a woman has ever been a conscious villain, and you can sympathize in some sort with the blackest scoundrel unhung if you come close enough to him."

† *Cf.* Goethe, *Tour in Italy*: "It was the teaching of St Philip Neri that one ought to despise the world, to despise oneself, and to despise being despised. And, in fact, this is the end of all knowledge.

I say a glory; for do not imagine that the ultimate aim and object of humility was to abase you; on the contrary, it was to elevate you. No other doctrine has ever exacted so lofty an exaltation of the human soul as Catholic doctrine; no other has ever set before that soul a grander or a more marvellous ambition. Catholic doctrine speaks to the soul only of her Divine origin and of her Divine destiny; it gives her God for a brother and heaven for a country; it inspires her with so profound a reverence for herself that the slightest deviation from righteousness, the least disregard paid to the whispers of conscience, fills her with horror, and that she would try in vain to live in peace had the smallest stain dimmed the splendour of her personal dignity. Thus, according to Catholic teaching, the highest elevation of soul should and does unite itself with the deepest humility. But how can that be? How is a boundless, immeasurable ambition compatible with aspirations of an absolutely contrary nature?

I might, indeed, put that question aside, leaving it unanswered, since I am now dealing only with the phenomena of Catholic doctrine. However, it is not unprofitable for us occasionally to go below the surface and penetrate into the hidden secrets of things. Let us then deal with this apparent contradiction which perplexes us,

The pessimist often fancies that he has attained the two first points; but to aim at the third, one must needs have started on the road to sanctity."

and let us penetrate even to the essence of humility. Be assured, Gentlemen, true elevation is not that which nature brings about, raising one man above another in the world of sight and sense.* True elevation, essential and eternal elevation, is the elevation due to merit, the exaltation that comes of virtue. Birth, fortune, genius, are nothing before God. For, what is birth in the sight of God, Who is not born? What is fortune to God, Who has made the world? What is genius with God, Who is the Infinite Mind, and from Whom comes to us that little extraordinary flame which we call by that grand name? Evidently those things are all nothing in the sight of the Eternal God. What is something in His eyes, what counts as something in His reckoning with the soul of man, what draws us towards Him, is that personal elevation which is due to the efforts of a virtue which, in whatever rank nature may have placed us, reproduces in our soul a true and faithful image of the Deity. Now, the lowlier the place from which virtue exalts itself, the greater is its merit. To imitate God, to grow more and more like Him, when we are close to the first steps of His throne and almost see Him face to face, is an easily-gained merit; but when one of His creatures in an inferior rank, without any

* *Cf.* Bishop J. L. Spalding, *op. cit.*: "The cock of the walk, says a French writer, is generally a goose. . . . There is no social state more disgraceful, says Cicero, than that in which the wealthiest are considered the best."

advantage of birth or fortune or genius, bent and bowed down (it may be) with toil, and with toil perhaps of the meanest and most degrading kind; when such a man, by an impulse of his heart, lifts himself up even to God, his whole soul flooded with the purest and most undying love of God, when, though seemingly so far removed from Him, he offers to his Creator the reflected image of Himself, then undoubtedly his abasement in the hierarchy of nature will increase his elevation in the hierarchy of merit. Humility, then, does not exclude exaltation; it serves it, and, what is more, it produces it. For, what is the virtue which constitutes the hierarchy of merit? It is, most evidently, nothing else than the devotion of ourselves to others; and this devotion of one's self to others cannot be practised without self-abnegation or self-sacrifice.* Can self-sacrifice be accomplished without the first sacrifice being that of pride? For, what is pride but self, always self, self above all others, self more than the whole universe, self more than humanity, self more than God? What is pride but selfishness, egotism? And as

* *Cf.* G. K. Chesterton, *Essays*: "Self-sacrifice does not mean self-effacement; it does not mean making oneself outcast. It means making oneself sacred. And this is done by dedicating oneself to some great thing of whose greatness one will henceforth partake." And Dr Sophie Bryant: "No man is fully alive who is not ready to die for something. The characteristic law of human life, as we feel it in our most vivid moments, is not self-preservation, but self-devotion passing into readiness for self-sacrifice. *He that loseth his life for my sake*—for some sake—*shall find it.*" Also Rev. R. H. Benson, *Papers of a Pariah* (London, 1907): "Such things as chivalry and self-sacrifice can be defended by no arguments which the materialist is capable of adducing."

egotism and virtue are two opposite terms, it follows that pride and virtue are incompatible one with the other; and so it is manifest that virtue and humility come under one and the same definition, and that to abase oneself is to exalt oneself.* Pride is but the form taken by egotism, it is but littleness which exalts itself and would fain despise and oppress all else; humility is the form taken by love, the passion of the being that is really great who would make himself of no account in order to give himself more entirely to others.† Thus God is the most

* *Cf.* Christopher North, *Noctes Ambrosianae:* "We idolize Genius to the neglect of the worship of Virtue; to our thoughts, Genius is all in all, Virtue absolutely nothing. One truly good action performed is worth all that Shakespeare ever wrote. Who is the 'Swan of Avon' in comparison to the humblest being that ever purified his spirit in the waters of eternal life? Is it Genius, or is it Virtue, that will send a soul to heaven?"

Also Lacordaire, Sermon from the text *Esto vir* (3 Kings ii, 2): "The practice of the greatness of the Gospel is incompatible with meanness of character. It is well that we should know what we mean by making Christians; whether we intend to make real men or vulgar men; whether for us man is the *homo*, whom the ancients derived from *humus*, earth, slime; or the *vir*, the man who is something more than earth, who has courage, soul, virtue, *virtus*. A man may have a great mind and a vulgar soul, an intellect capable of enlightening his age, and a soul capable of dishonouring it; he may be a great man in mind and a wretch at heart." And his *Third Conference of Toulouse:* "I can never hear that expression 'an honest man,' but with a softened heart; it brings before me the image of one whose heart has never framed injustice, or whose hand executed wrong, one who has been true to his word, faithful to his affections, sincere and firm in his convictions. When you meet him, Gentlemen, I do not ask you to bend the knee, for he is not yet a hero, but he is already a noble thing, and perhaps, alas! a rare thing, at least in its plenitude. Salute him then as he passes; and whatever you may be, a Christian or even a Saint, love to hear in your ears, and above all in the depths of your conscience, those beautiful words: 'You are an honest man.'"

† *Cf.* Taine, *L'Idéal dans l'Art*, Eng. trans. (New York, 1875): "To love is to have for one's end the happiness of another, to subordinate oneself to that other, to labour for and devote oneself to that other, and labour for and devote oneself to that other's

humble of beings; He Who is without equal has equals in the triplicity of the Divine personality; He Who is height unmeasurable, abased Himself to the depths of nothingness in order to make created being, and lowered Himself down to man in order to take his nature upon Him.* It is of Him, far more than of a Roman emperor, that the poet ought to have said:

Et, monté sur le faîte, il aspire à descendre.†

Such, Gentlemen, is the sentiment Catholicism has sought to produce in man. Has it succeeded? I leave you to judge. Has Catholicism really created humility in man? Has it induced him voluntarily to abase himself? You all know that it has. The history of Catholicism is familiar to you; you know what sentiments

welfare. You recognize there the highest of all beneficent characters." Brunetière, in his *Discours de Combat,* calls special attention to Taine's laying down that the decisive criterion for fixing the rank of works of art is the degree in which their character is beneficent, or makes for good. *Cf.* also Lacordaire, *Conferences of Notre Dame,* I: "Leibnitz has said: 'To love is to place one's happiness in the happiness of another.' That sublime definition needs no commentary; it is understood or not understood. He who has loved understands it; he who has not loved will never understand it."

* *Cf.* Lacordaire, *Conferences of Notre Dame,* iii: "Our saints are reproached with having been mad; ah! yes, they did lose their senses! Is it possible to love without madness? To love is to immolate oneself on the altar of the beloved, to prize the life of the loved one immeasurably above one's own, to prefer anything, agony, death even, rather than wound the heart of the object of one's love. Is not this madness? Do you remember the soldiers who, not long ago, went without shoes and without bread to fight on the frontiers, and died contented, crying, with their last breath, *Vive la République*! That was also a species of madness, but of that sublime madness which creates and saves nations, and which, magnified on Calvary in the person of a God, re-created and saved the world, and, transmitted into the Catholic Church, will there perpetuate the heroism of virtue."

† Corneille, *Cinna,* II, i.

animated the saints, with what sentiments you yourselves are inspired by the Church. It was Catholic doctrine that inaugurated in the world a true love of superiority, and which has produced the feeling of equality and of fraternity, according to the saying of the Apostle: *Love one another with the love of brotherhood* (Rom. xii. 10). Finally, it is Catholicism that has begot in us the inclination to make ourselves little, to come down from our pinnacles, whether of rank, birth, fortune, or genius. Of this humility kings themselves have given us illustrious examples; and every day we have examples of it in countless souls who, unknown to the world, imitate the humility of Calvary, in the midst of that terrible pride which still reigns in humanity, although it no longer reigns over humanity.*

* *Cf.* Pascal, *Pensées*, Eng. trans. by C. Kegan Paul (London, 1901): "It is dangerous to prove to man too plainly how nearly he is on a level with the brutes without showing him his greatness; it is also dangerous to show him his greatness too clearly apart from his vileness. But it is of great advantage to show him both." Also Canon J. B. Mozley, *Letters*, 333: "All satirists, of course, work in the direction of Christian doctrine, by the support they give to the doctrine of original sin, making a sort of meanness and badness a law of society."

V

Catholicism and Brotherhood

In the year of Rome 680, during the consulate of Varro Lucullus and Cassius Varus, at the foot of Mount Vesuvius and within view of the Bay of Naples, two or three hundred men were assembled. They bore strongly-marked traces of our common dignity, and yet there were also discernible in their whole being the marks, too visible, of a painful degradation. Presently the silence was broken by the voice of one among them; he came forward and addressed the others in these words: "Companions in misery, friends most dear to me, are we content to endure even to the end the outrages that have been heaped upon us? Humanity is nothing but a name to us; we have no part or lot in its advantages; outcasts from the world, grasped from our earliest days by the iron hand of destiny, we have, up to now, only served to amuse our masters by barbarous entertainments, or by our labours to furnish means for their ostentatious pomp, their effeminacy, their voluptuousness. It is true that we have now

fled from that tyranny, we are free; but you know that this liberty is still only servitude; the whole empire, the whole earth, is against us; we have no friends, no country, no home. But do we want other friends, another country, another protection, than ourselves? Let us consider who and what we are, and first count our strength. Are we not the greater in number? What are our masters? A handful of patricians whose houses we people, who continue to breathe only because we have not the courage to lay hands upon them and stifle them. And if it is as I say, if we have the power of the majority, if nearly the whole of mankind is enslaved to a despicable minority enjoying all and abusing everything, what is to hinder us from rising in a body and at once making a stand in the world and asking the gods to decide between us and our oppressors? We have not only numbers on our side, we have intelligence also; many of us have taught their masters, many of us teach their masters' children; we know what they know, and what they know they learned from our instruction; we are their grammarians and their philosophers, and it is we have taught them that eloquence which they bear to the Forum for the oppression of the whole world. Last of all, and above all, we have right on our side: for, who has made us slaves? Who has decided that we and our tyrants were not equals? Where is the title of their sovereignty and of our

servitude ? If it be war, let us make war in our turn ; let us try our luck for once, and let us merit by our courage that the Fates may be propitious to us." Having spoken thus, Spartacus stretched out his hand towards heaven and towards the sea ; his gesture put the finishing touch to his speech ; the crowd who had been listening to him rose up, feeling that they had a leader ; and eight days later 40,000 slaves, ranged in order of battle, put the Roman generals to flight, stirred up Italy from one end to the other, and, like Hannibal, saw themselves as conquerors about to behold the smoking ruins of Rome.

They were vanquished, however, notwithstanding their numbers and their courage ; and Pompey, coming to put the seal upon their defeat, had but to write a few lines to the Senate to report that the vile slaves had returned to their legitimate nothingness.

Such was the condition of the world some years before the coming of Jesus Christ. A large portion of mankind had neither country, family, nor rights ; in law they were classed as things, not as men. They were treated as a more intelligent, stronger race of animals, but with no other distinction than that of being more fitted for profitable servitude.* I might confine my-

* Cicero (*De Off.*, ii, 21) tells us that among the 1,200,000 inhabitants of Rome in his time, there were scarcely 2,000 proprietors. It is reckoned that in the entire Roman Empire there must have been 60,000,000 slaves. *Cf.* P. Allard, *Les Esclaves*

them that possess this gift, and with so many imperfections, what are the rest? What does man see around him? Men not only deprived of the grace and majesty of their nature, but disfigured by toil, debased by numberless evils, in whom the eye can no longer perceive anything but a sort of machine which moves itself. And if we penetrate through the body into the soul, misery and shame reveal themselves there under aspects that excite scorn instead of pity. Pride with nothing to be proud of, ambition, selfishness, hatred, sensuality—all the vices contend for that interior visage of man, and aspire to dishonour it. What is there left for love? To what vestige of beauty will man cling in order to love his fellow-man and in brotherly kindliness to share with him the pains of toil and the joy of possessions?

Man does not love labour. He loves only the activity that flatters pride and dispels weariness. Pascal has said that a man will become dispirited and melancholy if he has not some occupation or diversion which will hinder him from thinking of himself. That is true; we love activity, but it must be an easy and congenial activity, which brings us respect and honour, which (according to the expression of Mme de Staël) adds an interest to repose and, without fatiguing us, gives us the satisfaction of holding and pulling the strings that set the world in motion. It is the indolent activity of command which attracts

us ; but as soon as there is any real fatigue of mind or body to be endured, we strive to throw it upon others as much as we can. Labour is a penalty. It was imposed upon man when God drove him from the earthly paradise with this sentence : *In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread* (Gen. iii. 19). In rejecting toil we do but reject a punishment ; and in order to accept it, when love is wanting to us, we must needs be urged by nothing less than the force of sheer necessity. Now, man is wanting in love for his fellow-man ; and his dislike for toil, coupled with the necessity of toil, constantly inspires him with the idea and the temptation of imposing servitude on others. How far, then, is he from the fraternity which is the reciprocal sharing of the heart, of labour, and of goods !

We should be inclined to believe that man, having amassed more wealth than he has any use for, would feel no pain in giving of his superfluity. But no ; he never gives willingly. When he no longer knows what to do with his gold, he buys the land that produces it. Being often without children to succeed him, or reduced to nephews whom he detests, he purchases more land, and if there is not enough of land for him to buy he buries in deep coffers the gold which is become doubly useless to him, affording himself sometimes the pleasure of gazing upon it, of counting it, and of ascertaining exactly by how much his happiness is increased !

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What real joy can there be in this? Neither you nor I can imagine; we only account for passions of which we have ourselves been victims. The poor cannot understand the case of the rich who would rather hoard than give; but there it is.. Sometimes it even happens that the rich man gets weary of his wealth; an overpowering disgust for it takes possession of his soul: he might, one would imagine, open up for himself a new vein of pleasure by reclaiming some ruined family from misery, by portioning some poor young people who love each other faithfully. He will not even have to seek for misfortune; poverty and sorrow will mount his staircase of their own accord, they ascend unbidden and unexpected; they knock at the door of his chamber, bearing to the wretched being a blessing which he recognizes not. But satiety, carried to such a point as to become pain and grief, does not even then teach man the secret of disencumbering himself of even a portion of his superfluous wealth. He considers that the honour of being richer than other men is worth being purchased with suffering. Here again, you and I do not comprehend this state of things; but there it is, and it reveals to us a third source of the servitude which in the ancient world was substituted for fraternity.

In effect, if man does not love his fellow-man, if he hates labour, and abhors the sharing of his wealth with others, does not the establishment

of servitude follow as an inevitable consequence? Why should I not take advantage of my power against the man I despise, by subjecting him to labour of which I relieve myself and which serves both to build up my fortune and to swell my importance? Why should I not attach to my household, at the smallest possible cost, as many men as possible to minister to the gratification of all my senses? Why, if I am able, should I not have, as people have in India, attendants to drive away importunate insects from my face, others to carry me in a palanquin, others to have cooling drinks always ready at hand for me in case I should become thirsty, others to escort me when I go abroad and to do me honour? It is possible, of course, that I may not find any occasion that will afford me the opportunity of putting down and keeping down my fellow-men, but it is hardly likely. Have oppressors ever failed to get such an opportunity in this world of ours? When once the causes of servitude have taken root in the heart of man, who will resist it? What standing will the weak have against the strong? Who will stand up and speak for man, if his fellow-man despises him? The very result of man's lack of love and of his greedy passion for self-aggrandizement will of necessity be that whole generations of disinherited men will succeed one another; those generations will murmur, protest, agitate, will threaten and

alarm the more fortunate ones of the world; it will then be necessary to create and organize some powerful force to deprive those malcontents of the idea of revolt and permit egotism to slumber peacefully. What more natural than to effect this by reducing them to a state of servitude which will degrade them in their own eyes and will not allow them even to dream of laying claim to any different treatment?

What I have said is no fanciful interpretation of man's sentiments. God has permitted slavery to exist up to the present day, in order to reveal to you continually what you yourselves really are apart from that charity which comes from Him. You may have been inclined to believe that you loved mankind naturally and of yourselves, and that philanthropy would be quite sufficient for the establishment of universal fraternity. God has taken care to undeceive you. Let Europeans descend a few degrees of latitude and go to a country under a hotter sun; their philanthropy vanishes at the doors of a sugar factory. Having become slave-owners, they will at once discover the most powerful reasons in the world in favour of slavery, the very same reasons which I mentioned but just now, the necessity of labour, the impossibility of performing it themselves, the duty of accumulating wealth, the inferiority of the subject race: if that subject race is not yet sufficiently on a level with the brute creation, its masters will

do their best, by ill-treating it and by depriving it of the advantages of education, to bring it down to that level, so that its abased and brutalized condition may be held up as a proof that it is incapable and unworthy of liberty. Such is man, Gentlemen, and such are the obstacles to the establishment of fraternity which Catholicism must have found in him. Let us see what Catholicism has done to surmount those obstacles.

Jesus Christ laid down for the foundation and maintenance of fraternity three cardinal rules, which we find in three well-known passages of the Sacred Scriptures.

The first is this : *I give you a new commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another* (John xiii. 34–35). Notice in the first place that expression, *I give you a new commandment.* Jesus Christ made use of it only on that one occasion, at least in so express a manner. Humility and chastity, although new things, were less novel than this precept, *Love one another.* And Jesus Christ adds that it will be the sign by which His disciples will be recognized ; not that humility and chastity are not also most evident and sure signs of the Christian profession, but because charity is the ocean in which all the other virtues begin and end. It is charity which makes men humble and chaste ;

it is charity which is the principle and the end, and consequently the capital sign, of the soul's transfiguration.

Note also that Catholicism on its appearance before the world does not say with Spartacus: "Rise up in arms, assert and claim your rights"; it says with calmness and simplicity: "*Love one another*; if there is one among you who complains of not being loved, let him be the first to love; love begets love." When two shall love each other and the joy of their hearts shall be seen, a third will come who will desire to be loved also by bestowing his love; and then a fourth.* What you lack is not a right, but a virtue. Now, no law can give you a virtue, no victory can create one for you. If Spartacus had vanquished, the world would have become on the morrow what it was the day before; the slaves would have become masters, the masters slaves; and, moreover, all those victors, intoxicated with the spoils of Rome, would have murdered one another in the name of fraternity. A virtue is not born upon battle-fields; the soul is the only soil in which God sows its seed and from which He gathers it in. What do you yourselves do when you find that you have not some plant that you require for your garden? You seek it afar,

* *Cf.* J. Boubée, S.J., in *Etudes* (June 20, 1922): "While preaching fraternal charity to mankind Catholics do not delude themselves into thinking that the masses will ever practise fully that which is so admirable in the saint, so difficult and meritorious in the Christian."

under the sun which ripens it; you plant it, and you cultivate it with additional care, as the soil in which you have placed it is not its natal soil. Well, so it is also with the cultivation of virtue; the only difference is that it is not necessary to go so far in search of virtue: the kingdom of God is within you; the soil is your soul, and you have just received the seed; it is contained in these words: *Love one another* (John xiii. 34).*

It is also in that second saying of Jesus Christ: *If any one among you will be the first, let him be the last; and he who would be the greatest, let him be your servant, even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister* (Matt. xx. 26–28). You complain of being slaves; you know not what you say. A man is a slave when he serves against his will; serve of your own accord, and slavery will be destroyed. You have been told that the greatest misfortune and the greatest degradation is servitude; but I say to you that if you will but make an act of love of servitude, what was

* *Cf.* Canon P. A. Sheehan, *The Blindness of Dr Gray*: "The commandment of love is the final law of the universe, although everything in nature and in man seems to disprove it. Love is the sole law which should govern the moral world. It is a doctrine difficult to believe, as the law is difficult to practise; but the law is final. It is the last word that has been uttered by Divine and human philosophy." And Bishop J. L. Spalding: "The mother watching by the side of her sick child would shrink from the thought that she is doing what duty bids; duty is swallowed in love. The Saviour spoke not of duty, but of love; and millions of hearts respond to His appeal, for hundreds who are swayed by the cold and imperative command of duty."

ignominy will become a glory, what was slavery will become devotedness, what was the last thing will become the first, and what was the height of misfortune will become ecstasy. Do you not know that there is nothing more sweet than to love? And when we love we give ourselves; when we give ourselves we serve; and when we serve from love we are happy.* Serve, then, through love: and what will be wanting to you? It is true that the order has been inverted, because it is love which precedes service, and here service has preceded love; but what does that matter? Re-establish order by loving; provided service and love are together, the mystery of blessedness is accomplished. Do you, then, all of you, my brothers who are slaves, form a holy republic of love; love one another, and love your masters with the same love as you bear to yourselves; you will end by disarming them, by persuading them to love you also and to love one another themselves. Nothing is so contagious as virtue when it has reached the stage of love. Your masters regarded you as enemies; they really feared you more than they hated you: when they see that you love them and that you serve them freely, their eyes will be opened, your liberty will spring up of itself, as fruit rises from

* *Cf.* Tolstoy, *A Confession and What I Believe*: "I now believe that my welfare, and that of other people, is only possible when each one labours not for himself, but for others, and not only ceases to withhold his work from others, but gives it to anyone who needs it."

its parent tree and falls of itself when it is ripe.*

There remains a third pronouncement from the lips of Jesus Christ which is necessary to the establishment of fraternity: *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven* (Matt. v. 3). You complain of the hard-heartedness of the rich; do not imitate them: love poverty, and give of the little you have to those that have still less. Do not say that you cannot deprive yourself of your share if others do not do likewise; give yours first, the others will give theirs also; yours will be rendered back to you a hundredfold, and the spirit of poverty, without laws, without violence, without interminable re-settlements and re-distributions

* *Cf.* G. Papini, *Storia di Cristo*, Eng. trans. (London, 1922): "For innumerable centuries have we not been experimenting and re-experimenting in this world? . . . Jesus proposes His experiment—the last. The experiment of Love. That which no one has carried out as yet, that which very few have attempted to follow, but for a brief period in their lives; the most difficult experiment, the most contrary to our instincts, but the only one capable of fulfilling its promise." And Louis Bertrand, *St Augustin*, Eng. trans. by V. O Sullivan (London, 1914): "The gentle violence of St Augustin's charity wins the adherence of hearts. He breathes only charity. After St John, it is he who is the Apostle of Love." Also Goethe: "Love alone can give us freedom." And Schiller: "Love is the price of love."

Cf. also Sir Hall Caine, in the *Sunday Times* (July 19, 1923): "To read the memoirs of many chancellors and statesmen who have been responsible for the foreign policy of their countries is to feel that you are listening to the audible and unashamed confessions of criminals who are waiting and watching for opportunities to take rival nations unawares, to trick them, to deceive them, to pick quarrels with them, to steal territory and trade from them, to behave treacherously towards them. . . . The salvation of the world from the after-effects of the war lies in getting back to the moral ideal of Christ—the ideal of human brotherhood, of mutual trust and help and sacrifice."

of property, will destroy the enmity between the rich and the poor man, making the one a good steward and the other a protégé of Providence.*

No doubt all this doctrine is as simple as it is profound; yet no one had discovered it. It is the same with it as with the discovery of America by Columbus: his project appeared chimerical before he succeeded, and then everyone was surprised that the idea had not occurred to his own mind: it was only a matter of equipping a vessel and sailing straight on. However, in connection with Catholic teaching we have an additional marvel: doctrine conceived and promulgated is still but a small thing; it must become effectual of itself, without the help of any conquering army or of any legislation. It must be accepted freely, practised freely, and that in opposition to all the tendencies of humanity. Man was told to love his fellowman, he who did not love him; he was told to serve him, he who only liked to be served; he was told to give of his possessions, he who had the greatest aversion from depriving himself of any of his goods. Evidently there was no sort of proportion between the means and the end. And yet see what the success has been? I turn over some pages of the New Testament, and

* Socialism (somebody wrote) says, 'What is thine is mine'; Christianity says, 'What is mine is thine': the difference is infinite. *Cf.* Bishop J. L. Spalding, *Glimpses of Truth*: "The rights of man are prior to the rights of property, and they are more sacred."

I read: *The multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul; neither did any one of them say that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but all things were common to them. Neither was there any one needy among them. As many as had lands and houses sold them, and brought the price of the things they had sold, and laid it at the feet of the apostles, and distribution of it was made to each one according to his need* (Acts iv. 32–35). The Christian republic was formed; a republic, new, unknown, in which each individual had but one name, that of brother.*

But this republic was not to be limited to a corner of the world, existing there as a favoured and happy sect, and exhibiting to men, from afar, the example of fraternity. No, it was to extend over the whole earth; it was called upon to promote and establish everywhere the reciprocal sharing of the heart, of labour, and of goods. For that great work it had need of a priesthood founded upon the principle of fraternity; this priesthood it created. For the functions of government and of instruction it destined not princes and scholars but those

* *Cf.* Bishop J. L. Spalding, *Socialism and Labour and Other Arguments* (Chicago, 1902): "Homer is not so much the father of all our poetry, nor Socrates so much the master of all our intellectual discipline, as is Christ the fountain-head of the humanitarian love that makes men helpful to the weak and the wronged." Lucian wrote: "It is incredible to see the ardour with which the people of the Christian religion help one another in their wants. They spare nothing. Their first legislator has put into their heads that they are all brethren."

among the brethren, no matter what might be their birth, in whom charity shone with the greater lustre ; it chose the child of the herdsman and the son of the slave, crowning them with the glory of the priesthood, with the mitre of the bishop, with the tiara of the Pope, and saying boldly to the princes of this world : " To the feet of these you are to come to seek light and benediction. You, mighty Cæsars, you will one day strip yourselves of your pride ; you will humble yourselves before the son of your servant who formerly occupied some obscure place in the cellars of your palace ; it is to him that you will confess your faults ; it is he who will stretch out his hand over you, and who will say to you : In the name of God, Cæsar, thy sins are forgiven thee ; go in peace and do no more what thou hast done." The result was easy to foresee. As soon as the poor and the lowly were exalted by the very merit of humility to the throne of teaching and to the tribunal of conscience, human nature became invested with a dignity drawn from its very core and from a virtue possible to all : it was no longer birth and war, chance and cleverness, divers sources of exclusiveness and oppression ; it was no longer selfishness but charity which held the sceptre of the destinies of mankind. Slavery lost all its import, and that without struggles between masters and slaves, without any sudden and bloody revolution, simply by and through

the force of events. As the fetters of a prisoner wear out with time and by rubbing against each other, and the gaoler has no longer need to unloose them when the hour is come for setting the prisoner at liberty, so religion had no need to shake the slave's chains in order to make them fall off, they had become worn away by time and by the friction of Christian doctrine.

But the destruction of slavery was not the sole work required of fraternity; it was still necessary to provide for the service of human miseries. Catholicism created for them a gratuitous service; that is to say, a service of devotedness, without any remuneration beyond what the devoted individual needed for the necessities of life. This service entailed, as a matter of course, the practice of absolute chastity; it substituted the whole human race in the place of family.* I will not recount its history; who does not know it? Who is ignorant of the ingenious fecundity with which Catholicism has provided fathers and mothers for all kinds of misfortune? In each succeeding age it has with unerring penetration discovered what were the chief miseries of the age, and has at each discovery raised up fresh servants to meet the occasion.† It has produced the Sister

Cf. Novalis: "The Christian religion is the only religion for the wretched. It descends to the lowest and makes whole the sick ones of earth. The light shines the clearest where the darkness is most dense."

† "I confess," wrote Leibnitz, "that I have ardently admired the Religious Orders. For, what can be more glorious than to carry

of Charity as easily as it had made the Knight of Malta, the Christian Brother as well as the Brother of Mercy, the friend of the lunatic as well as the friend of the leper. You have still daily before your eyes examples of these creations, in which the power of charity joins hands with the power of misery, not allowing it to lay a finger upon the most obscure spot in humanity without following up that touch with the soothing impress of a healing hand. Thus has become established the reign of fraternity among men; an achievement truly incredible, even to those who witness it.

the light of truth to distant nations, through seas and fire and sword —to traffic in the salvation of souls alone—to forgo the allurements of pleasure, and even the enjoyment of conversation and social intercourse, in order to pursue undisturbed the contemplation of abstruse truths and divine meditation—to dedicate one's self to the education of youth in science and virtue—to assist and console the wretched, the despairing, the lost, the captives, the condemned, the sick—in squalor, in chains, in distant lands—undeterred even by fear of pestilence from the lavish exercise of these heavenly offices of charity? The man who knows not or despises these things has but a vulgar and plebeian conception of virtue; he foolishly measures the obligations of men towards their God by their perfunctory discharge of ordinary duties, and by that frozen habit of life, devoid of zeal, and even of soul, which prevails commonly among men."

Cf. also Dean H. Spence Jones, *The Golden Age of the Church* (London: S.P.C.K., 1906): "The monk has been at once the unwearied missionary of Catholic truth, the teacher of agriculture, the physician, the man of letters, the artist, the helper and advocate of the poor, the needy and the downtrodden. No expressions can exaggerate the beneficial influence upon society of these strange companies of men, bound by solemn vows; nothing can ever obliterate or even dull the splendour of the work done by the Monastic Orders." And the *Church Times*: "Altogether apart from the outrageously scandalous way in which the suppression of the English monasteries was carried out—a fact that any historian worth his salt is now bound to admit—it is a wholesome sign of the times to find that English Churchmen are gradually coming round to a general acceptance of the religious and social blessings that came to this country through monasticism during the many centuries in which it played so important a part in the national life."

I ask you what is the cause of so strange a phenomenon, after so many others which we have already seen. Why and how has Catholicism alone succeeded in abolishing slavery, in transforming the heart of the rich and the heart of the poor, in organizing that voluntary and gratuitous service which still obtains throughout Europe in spite of the united efforts of so many to overthrow and destroy it? I ask you, how has this been effected? How comes it that this Catholic doctrine, which alone already produces humility and chastity, should be also the only effectual agent in establishing fraternity—the only one, and ever the only one? The other doctrines do but destroy, or if they do preserve something of the vigour which they originally derived from Catholicism, only use that vigour to impair and distort the work and the gifts of Christianity.

I have already answered that this efficacy of Catholicism is Divine, since if it were merely human all other doctrines would, sooner or later, discover the secret of it. Why does man now love his fellow-man, if Catholicism has left man as it found him, with his own unchanged human nature and with no added attraction? Beauty, we say, is the sole cause of love; the Catholic religion, then, must have clothed man with a beauty which he had not before. But what beauty? If I look at your exterior, I see no change; your face and form are the same as

I formerly knew them, except, perhaps, that your features have lost something of their delicacy, and your figure something of its elegance. What new beauty, then, has been bestowed upon you? Ah! a beauty which leaves you men, but which is, nevertheless, Divine! Jesus Christ has made you sharers in His own eternal loveliness; He has touched your soul with His own; He has made of you and of Himself one single moral being. It is no longer you that live, it is He liveth in you. One of the saints said: "If we could see the beauty of a soul, we should no longer be able to look at anything else." This beauty which the world does not see, we Christians perceive; it pierces through the veil of dishonoured humanity, we feel it, we seek it; it captivates us, not for a day, like human beauty, but with the indelible charm of eternity.* If I love you, if I am forced to speak to you, if I would give my life to save the soul of any single one among you, it is not that I am more than man; but I see in you an inexpressible light which envelops you, penetrates you and, as I catch glimpses of

* *Cf.* Lacordaire, *Conferences of Notre Dame,* xxviii: "Thanks to St Elizabeth of Hungary it will be known throughout all eternity that a leper has obtained from a daughter of kings more love than beauty has ever conquered upon earth." And Lacordaire's *Letters:* "He who is called to the priestly office is he who feels in his heart the value and the beauty of souls. Priests are bad or mediocre, simply because they enter upon the office with some other thought than that of self-sacrifice to the mystery of redemption; all other deficiencies may be remedied, nothing will avail if this is wanting."

it in your soul, fills me with Divine rapture.* If you are Christians, you see it in me also. One day, and perhaps soon, this voice that now is announcing to you the doctrines of Christianity will grow weak and fail me; decline descends rapidly upon man, and with it isolation and oblivion. When that time is come, nothing will be left to me in your souls but the memory of an echo; but to me, as to you, in life and in death, there will ever remain the beauty that comes of Christ's likeness imprinted upon us, and the love that springs forth therefrom, to gladden us while living, and to embalm us in the tomb.

You yourselves have already had some experience of life, you have knocked at more than one door; tell me, have you not felt the difference between the man that welcomes you as a man, and the man that welcomes you as a Christian? Apart from your mothers, your sisters, and a small number of friends, what indifferent man, however much of a philanthropist he may be, has given you such a welcome

* *Cf.* Guizot, *Meditations on Christianity*: "The dominant idea in the Gospel is the worth of the human soul, of every human soul. Jesus came to influence and to save souls, all souls without exception —souls of the powerful and of the obscure, learned and ignorant, happy and afflicted. The condition and the salvation of souls is the foundation of the Christian Religion." And Bishop J. L. Spalding, *op. cit.*: "Comte thinks that Christianity is the consecration of egotism; and it is a fact that it regards primarily the individual and asserts the supreme worth of personality. But it also insists that the individual can rightly develop and find himself only in devoting his thoughts and life to the love and service of God and his fellow-man." See also F. Brunetière, *L'Utilisation du Positivisme* (Paris, 1905).

as you can feel to come straight from a heart full of warmth and sincerity? In what quiet room, in the retirement of which a philosopher keeps his glorious vigils, have you been received with eager affection? In whom have you recognized the bosom of fraternity? For my own part, putting aside those whom I have mentioned as exceptions, I have found it only in Christians, only in souls animated by the virtue of Jesus Christ, in priests to whom I confessed my faults, in some young men who came to me to confess theirs; loving souls bound to mine in a true fraternity, already aflame with the Divine fire of the communion of saints, and revealing to me glimpses of the undying rapture of perfect unity.

And you, men who are but men, permit me to ask you, How do you stand as regards human fraternity and human love? Alas! after many an illusion, you have ceased to believe in love; you have even become incredulous as to the existence of beauty, and the well-spring of mysterious joys is dried up in your heart. You have taken away from man the God Who dwells in him, and you are astonished at the desolation and emptiness which this deprivation has left. What need is there for me to cite again Mohammedanism, Protestantism, and Rationalism? We can as well consider the world in the mass as by analysis. Well then, since human reason, under divers aspects and titles, has combated

and weakened Catholic doctrine in the world, what progress has brotherhood made there? Its name is in every mouth, it forms the basis of systems and projects; we hear nothing talked of so much as the spirit of association and co-operation; men everywhere stretch out the hand of comradeship: and yet there is a sullen ground-swell of moans, of discontent, of human suffering unheeded, unpitied, unrelieved, which proclaims to the whole earth that the hearts of men have grown cold. If I hearken to the man that bears the burden of military service, to the magistrate absorbed in the functions of justice, to the professor busy with unravelling in the mind of the young man the secret of his inclinations, to the politician watching and studying public events; if, in fine, I hearken to the voice of society reaching me through all the many pores by which it finds an outlet, but one sentence rings out and pierces my ear: *Egotism, coldness, emptiness, are spreading throughout humanity*. We are conscious, even in the heat of political enthusiasm, of an undercurrent of weariness and dejection and heavy-heartedness, which tells only too plainly what is wanting in the soul. So it is with nature when the sun is sinking below the horizon, the sap ceases to flow, it is congealed; it would look for death, did it not ever hope for a resurrection.

The resurrection will come, Gentlemen. It

will come through us Christians.* Since the world, which will not have humility or chastity, desires fraternity, and is constrained to desire it and to strive for it, let it be our aim more and more to bestow true love. Let us gain our brethren by the blessings we shall heap upon them; and since from moment to moment coldness increases in the world, let warmth each moment increase in us, that we may be able to diffuse it in the world; so that, this Lazarus being in the tomb, if it be necessary for him to descend even there, we may have life enough for him and for ourselves, tears enough to weep for him, power enough to utter the great cry: Lazarus, although dead, hear the voice that recalls to life, and come forth! †

* *Cf.* Mr A. Birrell, *Address on John Bright* (1911): "What to-day are the prospects of humanity? What chances has she? This is an age which takes upon itself to swear at theology, and no doubt if a theology becomes incredible, there is an end to it; but theology, alone of the subjects which claim the grave attention of mortals, does at all events proffer an answer to this searching question."

† *Cf.* F. Ozanam, *Letters:* "The question which divides men in our day is no longer a question of political forms, it is a social question, that of deciding whether the spirit of egotism or the spirit of sacrifice is to carry the day; whether society is to be a huge traffic for the benefit of the strongest, or the consecration of each for the benefit of all, and, above all, for the protection of the weak. There are many who have already too much, and who wish to possess still more; there are a greater number who have not enough, and who want to seize it if it is not given to them. Between these two classes of men a struggle is imminent, and it threatens to be terrible—on the one side the power of gold, on the other the power of despair. It is between these two opposing armies that we, like St. Francis of Assisi, must throw ourselves, if not to prevent, at least to break the shock." And Bishop von Ketteler, *Addresses:* "If we wish to know our age we must endeavour to fathom the social question. The man who understands it knows his age. The man who does not understand it finds the present and the future an enigma."

VI

Catholicism and Kindness

There is a thing more generous than self-interest, more elevated than duty, more potent than love. Search your heart, and if you find it difficult to understand me, if your own gifts are unknown to you, hear the great Bossuet speaking of you: "When God," he says, "made the heart of man, His first gift to it was kindness." Kindness! That is to say, the virtue which consults not self-interest, which waits not for the command of duty, which needs not to be solicited by the attraction of beauty, but which inclines so much the more towards an object as that object is poorer, more miserable, more abandoned, more hateful, more worthy of contempt. It is true, it is true, man possesses that adorable faculty. I protest it in the name of you all. It is not genius, or glory, or love, that is the measure of the elevation of his soul; it is kindness. It is this that imparts to the human face its first and most invincible charm; it is this that attracts us one to another; it is this that commingles the goods and the ills

of life, and that everywhere, from heaven to earth, is the grand reconciler of beings.*

Above all other things, be kind. Kindness is the one thing through which we can the most resemble God, and the most disarm men. You have already traces of it in your heart, but these are tracks which can never be too deeply furrowed. Kindness in mutual relations is the principal charm of life. A mind which occupies itself with others, which seeks to avoid all that can cause anyone uneasiness, which is never silent through temper or through pride, this mind is that of a Christian, and it is one which delights all who have to do with it.† Kind and gentle thoughts towards others imprint themselves on the countenance, and in time give it an

* This paragraph is from Lacordaire's *47th Conference of Notre Dame*. The paragraph following is from one of his *Letters*.

† *Cf.* Tennyson's " Kind hearts are more than coronets." Also Robert Burns, *A Winter Night :* " The heart benevolent and kind the most resembles God." And Schiller : " It is heart and not the opinion which is an honour to a man." And John Boyle O'Reilly, *Poems :* " What is the real good ? I asked in musing mood. Order, said the law court ; Knowledge, said the school ; Truth, said the wise man ; Pleasure, said the fool ; Love, said the maiden ; Beauty, said the page ; Freedom, said the dreamer ; Home, said the sage ; Fame, said the soldier ; Equity, the seer ;—Spake my heart full sadly : ' The answer is not here.' Then within my bosom softly this I heard : ' Each heart holds the secret : Kindness is the word.' "

Says the *Times Literary Supplement* (July 6, 1922), reviewing Guilday's Life of Archbishop John Carroll : " All his biographers and contemporaries speak of Carroll's ' rare goodness of heart,' and this undoubtedly explains much of the success with which his administration of his Church invariably met." And Father Faber, *Kindness :* " Satire will not convert men. The fact is, geniality is the best controversy. The genial man is the only successful man. Nothing can be done for God without geniality. More plans fail for want of that than for the want of anything else. A genial man is both an apostle and an evangelist—an apostle because he brings men to Christ ; an evangelist because he portrays Christ to men,"

impress which attracts all hearts. I have never felt any affection but for persons in whose looks kindness was thus manifest. All besides leaves me cold, even if it were a head which bears the stamp of genius. But the first person who gives me the idea that he is kind touches me and carries me away.

VII

Catholicism and the Rights of Man.

Natural society is based on justice; justice, *juris subsistentia*, is the stableness of right and law; right is that which is due to everyone: but what precisely is that which is due to everyone? That is the question. Natural human society, then, rests upon justice, justice upon right, and right upon a problematical question. Men dispute about right as they do about truth, and their disputes about right and their struggles for what they conceive to be their rights will cease only with the human race.

It is true that, as there are in the order of truth certain propositions that are self-evident, so there are also certain primordial and powerful rules in the order of right which are well named by us the law of nature; but it is also true that even as the self-evident truths of common sense are confined within a very limited circle, so the principles of the natural law that are necessarily cognizable by us do not suffice to define and regulate our manifold social relationships. We know by intuition that there is a difference

between good and evil, that it is not the same thing to assassinate a father as to help and venerate him ; yet what are these elementary prescriptions when it becomes a question of justly determining the varied and complicated relations of a great multitude of people, of bringing persons and things and acts into harmony and of subjecting to rule and order even the most unforeseen events ? The most able politicians hesitate and are troubled before this task ; they advance a step, and then retreat, like the pilot who seeks his chart in the sky, but from whom the passing clouds and the motion of the waves constantly hide the polar star.

The rule of justice must, however, be fixed ; for no community can either form itself or exist without a rule determining the various relationships that bind together the members of the community. A community is really built up on those relationships ; and until law intervenes to co-ordinate them the community is but a fortuitous assemblage of unconnected interests and men ; the law is the tie which draws the individuals into community with themselves and with God, which creates for them a territory, a sovereignty, a country, a future. But who is to lay down that law ? Who is to decide in matters relating to command and obedience, labour and rest, punishments and honours, the acquisition and the surrender of goods ? Who will trace out for the infant society the path which it is to

follow through all the hazards of time, and prepare for it a code of justice which is capable of resisting all the vicissitudes of things and of the passions of men? A voluntary and primitive convention? A few men meeting together on the outskirts of a forest, moved by instincts of defence or of depredation, who shall settle by a compact the rudiments of a great society? That has been said, it has been written in a book which even now is renowned; and yet the author of *The Social Contract* has ended by avowing what history loudly proclaims, namely, that every human society has for its father a legislator. The legislator, the man of Providence, establishes the law; he establishes it with authority, by virtue of an ascendancy of which God is the first cause, but which issues secondarily from the qualities of the man and the needs of the community. Thus, Moses, Lycurgus, Solon, Numa, are venerated names, inscribed upon the pedestal which bears the statue of great nations. But, however venerable their work, and even without excepting Moses, how far has it been from attaining to all that mankind should hope for from a legislator? Mankind stands in need of a fundamental principle of justice, of an immutable law, of a universal law: no legislator before Jesus Christ had given this to men.

By a fundamental principle of justice I understand, not such a code as that which on account

of the eminence and authority of the legislator serves as the basis of a particular society, but a code which is so permeated by justice and truth that the force of experience, the successive criticism of generations, and the course of history can never accuse it of imperfection or disturb the State on its account. Thus, for example, when Moses brought down from Sinai to his people the commandment, *Thou shalt rest on the Sabbath-day and keep it holy*, it had an element of the fundamental principle of justice. Even to consider only the human side of that commandment, see what profound knowledge of human nature it supposes in the legislator, what a disinterested perception of the relation between the rich and the poor, between the man that labours and the man that causes others to labour. A very extraordinary sentiment of justice and a rare foresight must have combined to set up in so remote a period a law which appeared so strange, but which the future has so explained and justified that every society that ventures to despise or ignore it attacks the dignity, the intelligence, the liberty, the morality, and even the health of the people, and gives the workmen over, bound hand and foot, to the cupidity of their callous masters. That is what I call creating a fundamental principle of justice, a law which can never recede, which is for ever sacred; and why sacred? Because it springs from a glance from the very seat of justice,

from a flash of light descended from on high, where unchangeable and abiding order dwells in God, and whence flow upon us more or less abundantly those gleams of equity which enlighten us and determine the destinies of societies.

Now, which of the legislators of antiquity has founded a fundamental principle of justice in all its plenitude? Moses, of whom, perhaps, I ought not to speak, since he, by his history and his legislation, belongs to Catholic society—Moses himself has succeeded but imperfectly; and as to all the others, they have failed. The laws of Menou, of Minos, of Solon, of Lycurgus, of Numa, the most celebrated institutions, fall to the ground; they are monuments which have become destroyed, because their virtue was of too ordinary a nature to have sufficiently reflected the eternal visage of uncreated justice.

Nor have they to any greater extent borne the attribute of immutability, without which the best legislation is powerless to protect those that live under its guardianship; for every changeable law is at the mercy of the strongest, whatever may be the form of government, whether the nation has at its head a single chief or a body of governors; in the one case and in the other, the fate of all, or at least the fate of the minority, is without any protector if there does not exist between the sovereign and his subjects an inviolable law which covers the

entire community and protects the meanest citizen against the encroachments of the majority, and even of the multitude. As long as law does not reach this point, it is worthless. Rousseau has said : " If the people will do harm to themselves, who has the right to hinder them ? " I answer, everybody ; for everybody is interested in seeing that the people do not misuse their power and their unanimity, since their unanimity invariably falls back finally upon some individual, and is, in fact, only a form of oppression which is disguised by the very excess of its weight. It is against the multitude that law is necessary, much more than against any one individual ; for number has the inconvenience of giving to material power the sanction of apparent justice.* But law is only effective against the multitude or majority when the law is endowed with immutability and, in virtue of that resemblance to God, offers an invincible resistance to the weaknesses of the community as well as to its powerful conspiracies.

* *Cf.* Pascal, *op. cit.* : " Do we follow the majority because they have more reason ? No, but because they have more power. The way of the majority is the best way, because it is plain and has the power to make itself obeyed ; yet it is the opinion of the least able." Also Sir J. R. Seeley, *Lectures and Addresses* : " Liberty, in fact, means just so far as it is realized, the right man in the right place." And Mr Henry Ford, *My Life and Work* (London, 1922) : " It is the larger men who give the leadership to the community and enable the smaller men to live with less effort. . . . Democracy has nothing to do with the question, ' Who ought to be boss ? ' That is very much like asking, ' Who ought to be the tenor in the quartet ? ' Obviously, the man who can sing tenor. You could not have deposed Caruso. Suppose some theory of musical democracy had consigned Caruso to the musical proletariat, would that have reared another tenor to take his place ? "

I say the weaknesses of the community, for its weaknesses are as much to be feared as its strength. The community may be oppressed, as it may become the oppressor, and it needs to have within itself an element which, by its consistency, would discourage that secret tide of revolutions which time draws along after itself. All legislators have instinctively known this, and they have done all they could to give to their work the impress of immutability. You know what Lycurgus did. He made the Lacedæmonians swear that they would not change his laws until his return from his journey to consult the gods. But he never returned to Laconia. His laws had a shorter duration than Sparta, and his spirit did not rise from his tomb to remind the prevaricators of the sacredness of their plighted oaths.

It has been the same with all the other laws. They have perished in the very nation which had created or reformed them; every age has borne away some shreds of them, and what yet survives has become a mere relic, a subject of dissertations in our schools.

The ancient legislators perceived the necessity of immutability for their laws and failed to secure it, but the idea of universality as a characteristic of laws never occurred to them. The community was for the community; its law was its own property, the gift to itself which it had received from the gods; the rest of the

world were out of the pale of the law, being regarded as enemies, and the justice of men left to the vanquished enemy no asylum against servitude, death and extermination. Even within the community, the entire population did not participate in the law ; the citizen alone, the initiate of the country, could invoke it and demand of it authority, protection, and honour ; the others had no rights or benefit from the law.

A threefold inhumanity, Gentlemen, underlay the ancient law. In the absence of a fundamental eternal principle of justice, which should mount even to the sources of equity, the weak had no protection against the strong ; in the absence of an immutable law, the minority were defenceless against the majority ; in the absence of a universal law, man was the enemy of his fellow-man. Jesus Christ found human society in that terrible condition of powerlessness in respect of justice, and He has given to mankind what none of the ancient legislators had been able to give : a universal law, an immutable law, a fundamental principle of justice.

Jesus Christ comes into the world ; He is born, like other men, in a community ; He is born under a particular code of laws ; He is born in a country which has its history, its founder, its conquests, its celebrity ; He is born like a man who was looked for by a great people.

And what is the first thing He does while declaring Himself to be the promised one expected by that people? Does He say, "I am a Jew; I am come to enlarge my nation, and to extend it even to the extremities of the world"? No; He says simply, "I am the Son of man." And perhaps you are not surprised at this; perhaps it appears natural to you that in each page of the Gospel Jesus Christ calls Himself the Son of man, while He but rarely assumes the title of Son of God. However, that single expression, *the Son of man*, involves an entire revolution, the most important that has ever been witnessed. Before Jesus Christ, men said, I am a Greek, a Roman, a Jew; when menaced or interrogated, they answered proudly: *Civis Romanus sum ego*. Each one sheltered himself behind his country and city; Jesus Christ invoked only one title, that of Son of man, and thereby He announced a new era, the era in which humanity commenced, and in which, after the name of God, nothing can be greater than the name of man, nothing more effectual for obtaining help, honour, and brotherly love. Every word of the Son of man, every one of His acts, bears the impress of that spirit; and these words and acts together form the Gospel, which is the new and universal law. As soon as the Gospel was in the world, Jesus Christ sends His apostles to bear it to the human race: *Go*, He said, *and preach the Gospel to every creature*

(Mark xvi. 15). Propagation, communion, universality, became the watchwords of every movement; and where before was heard only the sound of egotism, is now heard only the quick march of charity.

Where are the Greeks? Where are the Romans? Where is the community? Where are the Hellenic and Quirital laws? St. Paul can no longer retain within his breast the song of triumphant humanity: *There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus* (Gal. iii. 28). O men who dwell under the four winds of heaven, men who think you are of different races and have different rights, you know not what you say; you are not here below by thousands and by millions, you are not even two, you are but one.

Therefore man is not alone, nor humanity; but man and humanity are united. Whoever touches man, touches humanity; and whoever touches humanity, touches God Who has made it, Who is its father and protector.*

* *Cf.* Mazzini: "Not till democracy becomes a religious movement can it hope to carry the victory. We must either obey God or serve men." And the *Church Times* (London, Dec. 9, 1921): "The full effects of the emancipation of man from God and from His Church are now becoming manifest. Socialism, it is true, counters Libertarianism with a revival of authority in the person of the collectivist and omnicompetent State. But it deifies that which it has first secularized, and when challenged to say on what basis the absolutism of majorities rests it has no answer to give. In the mediæval world all rights were Divine." Also O. A. Brownson, *Essays and Reviews* (New York, 1845): "Infidelity, Protestantism, Heathenism may institute a democracy, but only Catholicism can sustain it."

The Count de Maistre, excited by his ill-temper against the French Revolution, has said somewhere, in regard to the *Declaration of the Rights of Man:* "In the course of my life I have met Germans, Frenchmen, Italians, Persians; but I have never met with man." He was wrong, Gentlemen; like him, I have met with Germans in Germany, Italians in Italy, Frenchmen in France; but I have also met with man, and I found him in the Gospel.

The Gospel was the charter of man, the declaration of universal right.* But, however bold that declaration was, it was still only a declaration. It was, perhaps, not impossible

* *Cf.* Emile Faguet, *Le Libéralisme* (Paris, 1912), page 330: "I have said, with M. Brunetière, with Taine, with Montesquieu, that Christianity was the first foundation of the rights of man, and I hold that to be one of the most incontestable truths there are." F. Ozanam, *Hist. de la Civilis. au 5me siècle,* vol. ii, chapter ii: "Christianity first created *the people.* The people had not existed at Athens or Rome, or rather there had been three distinct peoples, the citizens, foreigners, and slaves. The Church was the first to speak with accuracy in addressing her instructions *clero et populo.*" And Tocqueville, *op. cit.*: "The Catholics constitute the most republican and the most democratic class of citizens which exists in the United States." Also Bishop J. L. Spalding, *Education and the Higher Life* (Chicago, 1907): "The life of Greece and Rome, compared with ours, was narrow and superficial; their ideas of Nature were crude and often grotesque; they lacked sympathy; the Greek had no sense of sin; the Roman, none of mercy which tempers justice. In their eyes the child was not holy, woman was not sacred, the slave was not man. Their notion of liberty was political and patriotic merely; the human soul, standing forth alone, and appealing from States and emperors to the living God, was to them a scandal." And Lacordaire, in a speech at Paris in 1848: "I do not easily comprehend what opposition there can be between two things so admirable as the liberty of the people and the old Catholic doctrine which created the people, for before Jesus Christ, before the Gospel, there were only masters and slaves. . . . Equality! Liberty! How can the Republic which inscribes that device on the portals of its temples be in opposition with the Church?"

that some other person had conceived the same idea,* and had said like Terence: *Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto.* As long as the Gospel was but a written word, it was the highest in the world, a unique book, an unequalled design, and that is all. It was necessary that the Gospel, announced to all the earth, should become a Divine law, the fundamental rule of human relationships, and that even those who denied its divinity as doctrine should accept its yoke as legislation. Now, is not that what we behold? Has not Catholicism, in extending and constituting itself from one end of the world to the other, carried with it the Evangelic law? Has it not imposed that law upon all its dispersed and united members? Has it not formed the foundation of general morals, so that a heathen action, even if it may not be repressed by the laws of each country, is become a thing impossible and a thing that inspires a feeling of horror? That is so; and the reign of the Gospel as law is much more extended than the

* *Cf.* H. Browne, S.J., *Our Renaissance* (London, 1918), chap. iii; and Fustel de Coulanges, *La Cité Antique* (Paris, 1864), liv. iv. Also Döllinger, *The First Age of the Church*, Eng. trans. (London, 1867), page 381: "It is clear, from a deeper view of even the Apostolic age, that the Christian Church was destined to become the school for educating men in true civil freedom, the very notion and meaning of which did not exist in the world before Christ; that freedom, namely, which rests on a recognition of the equality of other men's rights, and of individual dignity and independence. What the heathen world called freedom rested on the proportionate oppression and degradation of the great majority for the benefit of certain classes and citizens, who sought and found the freedom they desired in a democratic or aristocratic form of republic, and the absence of anything like monarchy."

reign of the Gospel as doctrine. He who does not adore God in Jesus Christ reveres in Him the sage; and there is not one of His enemies who contests with Him the title of the greatest of legislators.

And observe that the Evangelic law has not destroyed the particular laws of each community, any more than Catholic society has destroyed natural society. Nations continue to be the arbiters of their own destiny; each preserving its own character and all the attributes of power; they make their laws as before, with this single difference, that, nourished by the substance of the Gospel and emancipated from ancient egotism by a sentiment of general benevolence which is now innate in them, they do not sully their codes with laws that are unworthy of a Christian heart. The Gospel has not passed over the world like a violent tempest which tears up institutions by the roots; it was gently poured out upon it, like a healing stream which penetrates to the sources of life to purify and invigorate them. All things that come from God are invariably marked with a double sign: in them unity is allied to diversity, universality to individuality, domination to liberty. Hence the Gospel, in freeing the human race from the fetters of narrow justice, has not attacked the existence of nations. A universal law for a universal empire would have been the dream of a man; God has done better, He has created

a common law for a multitude of nations separated by their origin, their territory, and their institutions. He has left to them the free disposition of themselves, saying to them as a father to sons equally loved: Go and do your will, increase and multiply, declare war and peace, but always remember that you are but one in truth and charity.

This great liberty left to the nations has, perhaps, hindered the diffusion of the Evangelic law; it has rendered that diffusion more difficult of accomplishment. But what is difficulty or time? The work of God is still young, it is not accomplished; let us leave it to follow patiently the course it has chosen. If the sun of justice is not yet at its noonday, if it does not inundate all the children of men with its light and heat, it is their own fault; it is because they retreat as soon as it advances towards them. Some day it will travel yet faster; and as the torch of nature on nearing the horizon lights up the east and the west at the same time, so the Gospel, having reached the summit of its power and become the freely acknowledged master of the world, will fill the past and the future with its glory and its justice.*

Already, Gentlemen, every nation that does not in any way submit to the Evangelic law, is condemned, by the simple force of things, to

* *Cf.* C. C. Martindale, S.J., *Catholic Thought and Thinkers* (London, 1920): "Four real international forces survive. They and the Papacy, Labour, Freemasonry, and Jewish finance."

barbarism. What an unaccountable, and yet what an equally visible thing! Athens and Rome, before the coming of Christ, attained to civilization; but since the Evangelic law has been promulgated every nation that has not recognized it has, in the eyes of Christian nations, remained in a state of inferiority, which, even now, inspires more of scorn than of compassion. Look at the Mussulman; he is six centuries later than we are. Mohammed had the Gospel in his hands; he had power to copy it, and in fact he has copied it. Well, what is the Mussulman? What have Greece and Syria become under his domination? What has even the tillage of the soil become? There you have an example of the decadence to which God condemns the nations that reject His known and promulgated Gospel.* And it is easy to understand the reason of this. Before the coming of Christ, universal and perfect law existed for no one; nations were, in this respect, all on a footing of equality; it was then possible, in that common misery, that a legislator, supported by fortunate circumstances and, above all, by a secret protection of Providence, might elevate a nation to a certain degree of refinement

* *Cf.* Henry Murray, in the *Sunday Times* (August 12, 1923): "One of the earlier Sultans is credited with having said that 'where his horse trod, the grass ceased to grow,' and the statement—whether it was a misanthropic boast or a groan of remorse—was the epigrammatic rendering of a terrible truth. Turkish ascendancy has been an unmitigated curse to every community over which it has been established. What page, what line, what word, has Turkey written in the great volume of human achievement?"

and moral rectitude. But now that the Gospel has appeared, now that the beacon of perfection is lighted up before the eyes of all, the nation that rejects it is necessarily condemned to inferiority, and will, if it persists in repelling the influence of Christianity, vegetate in an inevitable and degrading barbarism. The Gospel has drawn into itself all the powers of civilization which before were scattered about in the world; and whosoever would aspire to goodness and to glory must no longer seek for them elsewhere.* It was pardonable, it was even praiseworthy in Lycurgus to consult the Delphic Oracle; in Numa, to converse with the nymph Egeria: but now the oracle is in Rome, because the Gospel is there in its highest representative, and he that does not go there humbly to draw forth inspirations of sovereign justice will build nothing but a city without a blessing.

* *Cf.* W. E. Gladstone, *Studies on Homer* (London, 1858): "Christianity has marched for 1,500 years at the head of European civilization, and has driven, harnessed to its chariot as the horses of a triumphal car, the chief intellectual and material forces of the world. Its learning has been the learning of the world, its art the art of the world, its genius the genius of the world, its greatness, glory, grandeur, and majesty have been almost, though not absolutely, all that in these respects the world has had to boast of." And Dean R. W. Church, *The Gifts of Civilization* (London, 1880): "Certainly the highest and most varied civilization that men have ever known has not come into being without Christianity." Also Hilaire Belloc, *Europe and the Faith:* "Europe will return to the Faith, or she will perish. The Faith is Europe. And Europe is the Faith." And Lecky, *Rat. in Eur.:* "Catholicism laid the very foundations of modern civilization." And Prof. T. F. Tout, *Address at Exeter* (Jan. 4, 1923): "Nearly everything that made the modern world what it is to-day sprang directly from the institutions, ideas, faiths and manners of the Middle Ages." See too Paul Allard, *Le Christianisme et l'Empire Romain* (Paris, 1896).

The Gospel was completed, promulgated, established: it became necessary to defend it, and, after universality, to assure to it immutability. This new charge was no small one. The Gospel protects weakness against power, purity against all inordinate desires, modesty against every form of pride; it protects the hyssop against the cedar, the hut against the palace: it was sure to have enemies. The root of heathen morals exists always in the heart of man; there is a tradition of evil as well as of good, and it is impossible that evil should not often attain to public power. An emperor desires to repudiate his wife, the Evangelic law forbids him to do so; another would marry two, the Evangelic law forbids it; a third covets the direction of consciences, the Evangelic law refuses it to him. You see what a number of causes of perpetual irritation, what a smouldering and inextinguishable war there is between the heathen and the Christian law. The Christian law must be defended; but how?

God has provided for this in a most profound manner. He has given us the Evangelic law not under the direct form of right, but under the direct form of duty. He has not said to us, "Here are your liberties"; He has said, "Here are your obligations." The difference is a capital one. It is not that duty does not imply right, as right implies duty. I cannot owe a duty to you without your having a right

against me; and you cannot be bound by a duty towards me without my possessing a right against you. But right is the selfish side of relations, duty the generous and devoted side; and great as the difference between heaven and earth is the difference between devotedness and selfishness, between constituting a society upon duty and constituting it upon right. Therefore the Gospel, which is the very naturalization of charity, was not a declaration of the rights of man, but a declaration of his duties.* And from that follows the whole system of the Evangelic defence against heathen persecution. That admirable maxim of Bossuet, "There is no right against right," however energetic and true it may be, is not the really Christian formula; the truly Christian formula is this: "There is no right against duty."

If, then, the Evangelic law is attacked in the person of an infant, of a maiden, of an aged man, they are all armed; the feeble reed will answer as did Pius VII: "Sire, I can easily cede to you my right, but not my duty; I can love you and

* *Cf.* Bishop J. L. Spalding, *Glimpses of Truth:* "Accustom thyself to the thought that thy rights are of minor importance, the fulfilment of thy duties being the essential thing." Also Mazzini, *The Duties of Man:* "The theory of Rights may suffice to arouse men to overthrow the obstacles placed in their path by tyranny, but it is impotent where the object in view is to create a noble and powerful harmony between the various elements composing the nation. With the theory of happiness as the primary aim of existence, we shall only produce egotists. We have therefore to seek a principle of education superior to any such theory, and capable of guiding men onwards towards their improvement. This principle is Duty."

admire you, even to giving up my life for you, but I cannot surrender my conscience; I may, O Emperor, lose all things for you, but not my soul; for my soul is eternity, and eternity is more than God, it is God and man together." Such is our defence. Between us and the persecutors it is not right that creates the obstacle, it is duty; it is not selfishness, but devotedness; right is behind duty, hidden and sheltered by that Divine shield.*

Besides duty, we weild no weapons of defence. *For*, said Jesus Christ, *the very hairs of your head are numbered; not one of them shall fall without the permission of your heavenly Father* (Matt. x. 30). And He Himself, ready the first to die for the Gospel, said to the Apostle who drew the sword to defend it: *Put up thy sword again into its place; for all that take the sword shall perish by the sword*—shall, that is, make a

* *Cf.* F. Brunetière, *Etudes Critiques*, viii, page 293: "And, in effect, is it not in our modern democracies that the citizen would be truly the slave or the chattel of the State, if he had not in religion a defence and a refuge against that imperious master?" And Thiers, *Speeches:* "The legislator who tries to make a religion of atheism is a madman, who must eventually ruin the country he misleads by his fanaticism." Also Bishop Berkeley: "Whatever the world thinks, he who hath not much meditated upon God, his own soul, and the *summum bonum*, may make a thriving earth-worm, but he will indubitably make a sorry patriot and a sorry statesman." And Mr A. Birrell, *Collected Essays:* "Had Newman led the secular life, and adopted a Parliamentary career, he would have been simply terrific, for his weapons of offence are both numerous and deadly. His sentences stab, his invective destroys. The pompous, high-placed imbecile, mouthing his platitudes, the worthy sophister with his oven full of half-baked thoughts, the ill-bred rhetorician with his tawdry aphorisms, the heartless hate-producing satirist, would have gone down before his sword and spear. But God was merciful to these sinners; Newman became a priest, and they Privy Councillors."

vain and ineffectual defence. It is the Cross that is the pretorian guard of the Gospel. When men have the honour to fight for the Cross, they must be eminently in the right, they must have on their side not only right but all the plenitude of respect and all the humility of love, and then their last exclamation will be: "I may not and will not do what you bid me do, kill me!" The enemies of the Cross of Christ may kill one, or two, or three; but to kill a man armed with duty is more than the strongest shoulders can bear. The poet has said as much:

La mort d'un honnête homme est un poids éternel.

And we have even better than that on our side: the salvation of the world commenced with a good man killed on Calvary.*

Therefore, violence is not the most formidable weapon against the Evangelic law, nor the greatest menace to its immutability. Right perishes less by violence than by corruption.† It was not Attila that was the greatest scourge

* See Bossuet's sermon on St Thomas of Canterbury, in our *Panegyrics of the Saints from Bossuet and Bourdaloue* (London, 1924).

† *Cf.* Guizot, *op. cit.*: "Christianity began with resisting absolute power, and with laying claim to liberty of conscience. The early Christians undertook the defence of liberty against tyranny, and never made appeals to insurrection against authority. Martyrdom, not murder; such is the sum of Christianity from its birth to the day when it mounted the throne of Constantine." And Tolstoy, *op. cit.*: "Progress towards the welfare of mankind is made not by the persecutors but by the persecuted." Also Canon W. Barry, *The Papacy and Modern Times* (London, 1911): "The Papacy was for hundreds of years suzerain over kings, and the Holy Roman Empire was its armed defender. It is now the head of a world-wide voluntary association, which wields no sword but its faith, and which owes nothing to secular governments."

of liberty and of human dignity, but the eunuchs of Constantinople. When Jugurtha went forth from Rome, and turned round to curse her, he did not hesitate about his anathema, he uttered but that short phrase, "*Emenda civitas!* O city who seekest only a purchaser! city who still holdest the scales in which Brennus formerly weighed thy destiny, and who holdest it, no longer to purchase, but to sell thyself!" It was the gold of Cæsar which was to be feared for the Gospel much more than his vigorous measures; the luxurious ease of the palace, a great deal more than the horrors of the dungeon; the seduction of the smile, far more than the severity of the judgment. Jesus Christ, then, armed His Gospel also against that kind of persecution. He formed for it for ever, by the virtue of the Cross, a militia, single-minded and poor, who, nourished inwardly by the hidden manna of a holy unction, had but little to ask from the world, and were always sure of finding that little.

Universal right and unchangeable right, the Gospel is also the fundamental principle of right; that is to say, it penetrates so far into the just and the equitable that no other more perfect law can be conceived. The Gospel is, like the Pandects of Justinian, a book of right; but it is a book of right of so singular a nature that no one can hope to surpass it, or even to imitate it. It has stood supreme and unique during eighteen centuries, guarded by the respect of all, and even

of its greatest enemies. The human mind, so fertile in resources, has not been able to discover either the equal of it or even a flaw in it. Men have denied the Divinity of Christ: but the Gospel remains; it is written. Men have denied the Divinity of the Church: but the Gospel remains; it is written. Who, then, has made this book? Whence is it come? Who maintains its empire? After so many changes and experiments, so many ruins and foundations, it remains always the same, that is to say, always perfect.* It is forgotten for a day; on the morrow it is seen, and men exclaim: The Gospel!

* *Cf.* Goethe: "Mental culture may advance as it will; but further than the sublimity and moral discipline of the teaching of the Gospel it will not go." And M. Paul Bourget: "Christ is the highest ideal ever presented to man, and the Christian religion holds within it the purest individual morals and the most comprehensive social truth ever seen or ever known in the world." Also Pascal; "Philosophers astonish ordinary men, Christians astonish philosophers." See Bossuet's sermon on the Exaltation of the Cross, in our *Great French Sermons*, 2nd series (London, 1919).

VIII

CATHOLICISM AND SOCIALISM

I POINTED out, in the preceding conference, that Catholicism has changed the face of human society by introducing into the world a new, fundamental, universal, unchangeable, eternal principle of justice. But this principle or law has not prevailed without contradiction; and even now, after so long a reign, it has adversaries who seek to dethrone it in the very name of the interests of the human race. I must, then, defend and justify it; and in doing so I hope to reveal to you its equity and profundity.

Here is the first position maintained against the Evangelic law by our adversaries: "You boast," they say to us, "that you have laboured for the weak against the strong; but if that has really been the intention and the aim of the Gospel, was it not the duty of Christians to put an end to the inequality that prevails in the distribution and enjoyment of this world's goods? If it is true that justice is the foundation of natural society, one of the chief aims of that justice should be the equitable division of

property.* Are there not men who actually die wearied out with their surfeiting abundance of wealth, and who, having satisfied all their passions and whims, do not know what to do with themselves and their almost unlimited wealth ; while others, and a very great number, can only eke out a miserable existence, and die of want and starvation ? Well, what have you, men of the Gospel, done to stem this horrible abuse ? What have you done to help the poor against the rich ? What you have actually done is to consecrate this inequality in the distribution of wealth ; you have sanctioned it ; you have placed it under the protection of God and of Jesus Christ ; you have declared that some should have everything, and that the others should be content to stretch out their hands and receive, under the name of alms, the crumbs which the rich choose to let fall from their tables and from their luxury. This is what you have done in a matter so grave, which affects the very life and death of humanity. We

* *Cf.* Louis Blanc, *Hist. de dix ans*, Eng. trans. (London, 1844) : " By *bourgeoisie* I mean the aggregate of citizens who, possessing instruments of labour or capital, work with the resources proper to them, and only in a partial manner depend upon others. The *proletariat* is the aggregate of citizens who, possessing no capital, depend on others completely, and in respect of the first necessities of existence." And Hilaire Belloc, in *Studies* (Dublin, Dec., 1917) : " As a detail in the discussion of nineteenth-century Socialism I should say, what is also my historical conviction, that a quarrelsome German Jew, Mordechai, who is better known under the pseudonym of ' Karl Marx,' was indoctrinated from Louis Blanc and from Paris, and was not the originator of the movement. A vast mass of contemporary opinion regards Karl Marx, though wrongly, as the father of modern Socialism, its great exponent and its original thinker."

demand an account of this from the Gospel, from the Church, from that power which you have exercised during so many centuries, from that new Evangelic law of which you are so proud, which has served but to sanctify in property the living source of all injustice and of all misery."

I do not disguise the objection, Gentlemen, and I shall answer it as frankly as I have stated it to you. But I shall reply to it without being wanting in respect for those who hold it and devote themselves to the study of the great social question; for, in the midst of the evils which result from the diminution of truth and of charity upon earth, we often meet with men who are devoted enough to be inflamed with indignation at such evils, ingenious enough to seek a remedy for them, but not enlightened enough to be able to keep themselves sufficiently reasonable and balanced when they attempt to devise and carry out schemes of reform. Others, who are quite as far from truth, trouble themselves less about the condition of their fellow-creatures, and pay no attention to social questions. I prefer the former; and I combat their errors, respecting, whenever it is possible, the illusions of their devotedness.

God has given the earth to man, and with the earth, an activity which renders it fertile and subservient to our needs. This primitive gift constitutes in favour of man a twofold ownership

—the ownership of the soil and the ownership of labour. The question is not then to know whether proprietorship should be destroyed; since it necessarily exists, by the elementary fact that man is an active being, and that no one, save God Himself, is able to snatch the land from his hands. But the question is to know to whom property belongs, whether it is a gift to the individual, or whether it is an indivisible and social gift, of which no one may claim more than the portion allotted to him by society according to certain rules. The tradition which favours individual or private ownership has been sanctioned by the Gospel. According to this tradition and the Gospel, God has virtually said to man: "Thou art master of thy labour, for thy labour is thy activity; and thy activity is thyself. To take from thee the domain of thy labour would be to take from thee the domain of thy activity, that is to say, the possession of thyself, of that which makes thee a living and a free being. Thou art the master of thy labour. Thou art also master of the soil, of that portion of it which thy labour has tilled; for thy labour would be nothing without the earth, or the earth without thy labour; they mutually sustain and live of each other. When, then, thou shalt have mingled the sweat of thy brow with the earth and rendered it fertile, it shall belong to thee, for it will have become a portion of thee, the extension of thy own body; it will

have received, as it were, the impress of thy personality and have become a part of thyself. I have, it is true, a primitive share in it as Creator, but I give it up to thee ; and that which comes from Me being united to that which comes from thee, the whole is thine. Nor shall thy ownership cease with thy mortal life ; it may be transmitted to thy descendants, because thy descendants are thyself, one with thee in the unity between the father and his children ; and to disinherit these of their patrimony would be to disinherit their father of his toils and of his tears. To whom else should that land fertilized by the expenditure of thy labour revert ? To another who has never laboured to till and improve it ? It is better that thou shouldst survive in thy children and still own this land in their person."

Such is, Gentlemen, the primitive right consecrated by the Evangelic law.

" Very well," retort our adversaries ; " but do you not perceive the terrible inequality which is bound to result from that individualistic principle of yours ? After a certain length of time, whether from the incapacity of some, or from infirmity for which no man is accountable, or from other circumstances, the land gets into the hands of a few who devour its produce in luxury and satiety, to the prejudice of the many doomed to poverty and want. Is not that a result which condemns this principle of individual ownership ? The consequence being selfish, the

principle itself must be selfish. If we love humanity, we must have recourse to another distribution of property, and boldly proclaim, because it is our duty, that labour and land belong to society—they are the common social fount, the common good, the very substance of the country, to which each of us should devote himself, looking only for such return or remuneration as society may deem proportioned to the merit of his labour. In this way the arbitrary distinction between the poor and the rich would cease ; if any irregularity should still exist, it would be due to capacity and virtue, not to the mere chance of being born to a position in which with high birth are jumbled up idleness, abundance, pride, egotism, all vices and all rights. You yourselves, O men of the Gospel ! in your days of holy inspirations, have you not realized that Divine republic ? When your missionaries founded the famous settlements of Paraguay, did you not, in the name of the Gospel, decree the community of labour and of possessions ? Was Paraguay any other thing than a happy family in which each member laboured for all and all for each ; in which the social power, itself also labouring, distributed to its children, in the most equitable measure, the fruits of their peaceful activity ? The whole world admires that creation of the Gospel, which brings back to mind the early days of Christianity. But, though capable of conceiving

and accomplishing this between two rivers of America, you have not been able to establish it as a general law of humanity; you have been timid and cowardly, you have given way under the pressure of men's egotism and self-love. And we, the children of the 19th century brought up, it is true, in your schools, and fed with the milk of the Gospel, we are obliged to remind you of your mission, and to give effect to the law of justice and of charity!"

Again, Gentlemen, I do not disguise the objection; and I claim no credit for having put it frankly, for I am ready with the reply to it, a reply which strikes me as being both forcible and clear. The institution which would transfer the whole proprietorship of the land and of labour to society would be an institution of universal slavery; it would establish a more real slavery and a greater inequality than any form of despotism has ever set up.*

Society, they say, should be the sole proprietor of the soil and of labour. But what is

*Cf. Hilaire Belloc, *The Servile State* (London, 1912): "If we do not restore the institution of private property we cannot escape restoring the institution of slavery; there is no third course." And G. K. Chesterton, *Short Hist. of England* (London, 1917): "The Trade Unions are confederations of men without property seeking to balance its absence by numbers and the necessary character of their labour. The medieval Guilds were confederations of men with property seeking to ensure each man in the possession of that property." Also L. McKenna, S.J., in *Studies* (June, 1921): "Both Bolsheviks and the rulers of the modern capitalistic States are using the same means to enslave their subjects—namely, the destruction of the institution of private property, which in the one case is being taken from the multitude to be given to the few, in the other taken from all to be given (in theory at least) to none."

this society? In appearance it is the whole world; in reality, when there is question of government and administration, it is always an extremely limited number of persons. Whether society is called monarchy, aristocracy, or democracy, it is always represented and conducted by two or three men who get called to power, and in whom is vested control of the whole social machinery. At twenty years of age we do not know this; at forty we no longer doubt it: we know that positive government, in spite of appearances, always falls into the hands of two or three men, and that these two or three men, as they pass away, are inevitably replaced by two or three more, and so on.* We know that, on that very account, it is necessary to impose upon power certain effective checks, without which, under government so autocratic and exacting, the earth would soon become uninhabitable. Now, property is one such check an invincible force communicated to man, which unites his life of a day to the immortality of the earth, to the power of labour, and enables him to stand upright, his arms folded on his chest

* *Cf.* Hilaire Belloc: "Socialism means the control of the means of production by the political officers of the community, or to put it in ordinary language, by the politicians." Bernard Holland, C.B.: "The modern Socialist desires that all power should be concentrated in a central machine which he can hope to master and exploit." And G. K. Chesterton: "I have no enthusiasm for the present system of capitalism, but whatever may be good or bad about Capitalism, Bolshevism simply means a further concentration of wealth and power into even a smaller number of rulers, who would be officials instead of capitalists. . . . Private property for a normal man is a necessity of human life and human dignity."

and the soil beneath his feet. Take away from him the ownership of the soil and of his labour, and what will he be but a slave? For there is but one definition of a slave: he is the being who owns neither land nor labour. Transfer this twofold ownership to society, that is to say, to certain men who govern and represent society: what will be left to mankind save universal servitude; hunger and thirst regimented under the rod of two or three quidams, the degradation of all under a species of pride such as we can scarcely conceive? The citizen will be nothing more than the slave of the State, and he cannot, without incurring the crime of high treason, fold his own two arms and go away; the soil will pass away from under his feet, the sky from above his head, and he will have the glory of being suspended in the void, for the greater happiness of himself and of humanity.*

* *Cf.* the *Church Times* (June 29, 1923): "Compulsory military service for all adult males demoralizes a country, unsettles alike religion and trade, and ruins domestic life. It was regarded by our ancestors as the most degrading form of servitude. Feudal tenures, indeed, imposed 40 days' service in the year on the holders of fiefs. A certain number of poor men were pressed or taken by lot for the army, but the compulsory service of all males with the colours was never dreamt of before the French Revolution. It was only in the last half-century that the system became practically universal on the Continent, and its effect has been apparent in the great increase of Socialism. If life may be conscribed, why not also wealth, asks the Communist. It is difficult to frame an answer." And P. Finlay, S.J., in *The Catholic Mind* (New York, March 8, 1919): "A not inconsiderable number of serious thinkers hesitate to admit that conscription law, as imposed by the modern State, carries with it any conscientious obligation. To sacrifice life for country as for friend is man's supreme act of love: Can the State require it compulsorily from any man, no matter how unwilling he may be? It is difficult to prove convincingly that the State has such a right. The difficulty is increased when we consider that

See, Gentlemen, what comes to pass in a country where property exists but is not insured against the sovereign's will by its inviolability! You forestall my thoughts, you are naming the country* to which I allude. Well then, since you know it, have you never felt what a heavy chain its inhabitants drag after them even to the furthest confines of the world, a chain which prevents them from breathing the air of freedom under any point of heaven? Have you never met one of those singular captives, who, laden with all the advantages of birth and fortune, is nevertheless unable—whatever may be his name, his history, his services, his power—to say that to-morrow he will not be wandering on the highways of Europe, asking alms, excommunicated from his country, having lost the patrimony of his ancestors, stripped of all he possessed, unable even to recognize himself: and why? Because he may have entertained a thought contrary to his master's; because he may have prayed to God otherwise than he! Sixty millions of men are in that condition! Sixty millions of men listen to their own breathing, fearing lest it might not be in unison with their master's, and lest the earth itself, rejecting them from her bosom for so great a crime, may refuse them

deliberately to kill my fellow-man, I should be assured beyond all reasonable doubt that justice is on my side in my quarrel with him. How often can conscript soldiers attain to such assurance, under modern diplomatic conditions; unless, indeed, they may presume it from the known integrity of their rulers?"

* Czarist Russia.

even a grave! There is what man is without the proprietorship of land and of his labour; and it is for not having brought him to this that the Gospel is reproached!

I add that this universal helotism would not be compensated for by a certain equality in the common degradation, but that in no other régime would the burden of inequality be greater and more odious. In fact, whatever distribution may be made of the land and of labour, the needs of society must still be provided for, and this entails the creation of a host of officials and functionaries to fill offices ranging from the highest and most pleasant to the lowest and most unenticing and repulsive. The progress of economic science will never efface the radical inequality of these offices. Now, in the system which I am combating, no man being master of his own labour, the choice as to who should fill these offices would remain in the hands of the power representing society; we should become slaves not merely wholesale, but also in detail. One will make verses, another turn the grindstone, and in every case by the decision of those in authority—according to the will, that is, of two or three men pompously termed the State. It is true that the distribution of offices is to be regulated by justice: to each person according to his capacity. What could be more wise and more natural? It is Nature herself that will decide.

I have a great distrust of Nature manipulated by a handful of men directing as potentates the activities of a nation. But, however that may be, let us see the results as regards equality. To-day I am poor, but I have reasons for consoling myself: if I am the owner of no land, I yet possess intelligence, a heart, my devotedness, my faith. I say to myself that, after all, if fortune be not unfavourable to me, I shall be as well able as another to use a pencil or a pen. God has neither given all nor taken away all at once; His gifts are distributed. But in the system advocated by our adversaries capacity becomes the measure of everything. My dinner is measured by the amount of my intelligence; I receive with a ration of food an official ration of idiocy. I was poor only by chance, I am now poor by necessity; I was insignificant only in one respect, I am now insignificant entirely. The social hierarchy conveys nothing but a series of insults. In a word, inequality was only accidental before, it is now logical; and universal servitude finds its only consolation in the domination of stupid people by clever ones. Yet this is what you would have the Gospel undertake to establish!

And yet, Gentlemen, the men who brought to light such strange ideas were not trivial, commonplace men, and several of them were men of devotedness* ; but you will arrive nowhere, if, in

* *Cf.* Lacordaire, *Conferences of Notre Dame*, xvi.: "The war against Catholic doctrine is no war of *enfants perdus*; it is a civil war, a social war; and as this war has been the history of eighteen

seeking to depart from evil, you depart from nature, and, above all, if you forsake the Gospel in order to do better than the Gospel. Community of goods and of life is an Evangelical idea; but observe on what conditions. In the first place, it must be voluntary, and so it could not have the character or the inconvenience of slavery. Secondly, the inequality of offices is accepted by an act of devotedness, and therefore ceases to be an outrage and an oppression. The whole of this Evangelical revolution is founded on the free conviction of the intelligence and the free concurrence of the heart; and that which it is desired to substitute in its place is a mechanical revolution, having no other origin than a dream and no other force than Parliamentary legislation.* If its success were possible, the human race would not have fallen from so high a liberty

centuries, as it involves your destinies and those of your posterity, you must needs pause and weigh well this public passion of statesmen and men of intellect against Catholic doctrine."

* *Cf.* Joseph Rickaby, S.J., *Political and Moral Essays* (New York, 1902), chap. v.: "I propose to say a little on the agreement, but more on the differences, between a Socialist Commonwealth and a Religious Order. . . . Without the religious influences kept at work all life long upon every member of the Religious Order, life in the Order would be impossible. But, it seems, no education is needed to be a Socialist (though it must be said that the Fabians are wiser on this point). Only an Act of Parliament or two, and we shall all change our natures." Also John Rickaby, S.J., in the *Amer. Cath. Quart. Review* (July, 1911): "The Acts of the Apostles, give no countenance to the interpretation of them in the sense that Communism was the general and the practically enforced teaching of the Apostles. Such community of goods as existed was evidently optional and limited in area, though almsgiving for the needy was universally expected. There are, however, some isolated passages from early Fathers which are much exploited by communists, with great show of conclusiveness in the eyes of those who see no further than the words specially garbled for a purpose."

into such abject slavery, nor from such real perfection into so rare a stupidity.*

I do not deny that the inconveniences of individual proprietorship are great: the abuses of it which obtained in heathen society called for more than reform—they called for a total revolution. The rich man had degraded himself and he had degraded the poor man, and nothing in common was left between these two living members of society save the miserable corruption of humanity. The rich had no longer any idea that they owed something to the poor. They

* *Cf.* W. McDonald, D.D., *Ethical Aspects of the Social Question* (London, 1920), pp. 217–8: "If our first father and his posterity had remained in the state of innocence, there would be no need of private property in the means of production; this is the teaching of all theologians. Private property in capital, therefore, is the consequence of inordinate appetites, not a necessity of human nature as such. There are two hypothetical principles, if I may call them so, as to which Socialists and Catholics are in perfect agreement: (1) that in proportion as men become unselfish and moral, under whatever influence, it is reasonable to limit private property in the means of production and transport; and (2) that the limitation might be made complete if all inordinate selfishness were to cease. The essential difference between us is: (1) that they regard man as being now less selfish than we believe him to be; and (2) that while they look forward to a golden age and universal garden of Eden, we have no hope that Astræa will ever come back to earth." P. Finlay, S.J., in *Studies* (Sept., 1919): "As in time of war the State may expropriate and control private owners, in so far as may be necessary for its existence and welfare, so too may it, in time of peace, if and in so far as the welfare of the people makes expropriation necessary. But not without fitting compensation, if compensation be possible." And John Rickaby, S.J., in the *Amer. Cath. Quart. Review* (July, 1911): "The exact proportion between property to be possessed individually and property to be possessed communally the Church does not pretend to determine; it will vary with the changes of social organization." Also J. A. Ryan, D.D., *A Living Wage* (New York, 1920): "Private ownership of the earth's resources is right and reasonable not for its own sake—which would be absurd—but because it enables men to supply their wants more satisfactorily than would be possible in a régime of common property. Human needs constitute the primary title both of common and of private ownership."

had deprived the poor of all rights, all dignity, all self-respect, all hope, all memory of a common origin and of fraternity. No one dreamed of instructing the poor, none cared for their infirmities and sufferings, nobody even thought of their death. They lived between the cruelty of their masters, the indifference of all, and their own scorn of themselves. This is where Jesus Christ found them: let us see what He has made of them.

There is an ownership inseparable from man, an ownership of which he cannot be deprived without ceasing to be a man, which society should never take from him—the ownership of his labour. Yes, Gentlemen, it is possible that you may not attain to the possession of land: the earth is limited; it has been inhabited for centuries; you arrive late, and perhaps it will cost you sixty years of a most laborious life to conquer for yourself a small portion of it. That is true. But, on the other hand, and as a counterpoise, the ownership of your labour will always be yours; you will never be disinherited in respect of this, and the possessor of land will not, without your help, without the expenditure of your labour, be able to make the soil that belongs to him productive. Your labour, if it be not the whole sceptre of the world, is assuredly the half: capital and labour are interdependent; a mutual bond of reciprocity is recognized

between them.* Such is the present order: but was it so before the Gospel came? You know, Gentlemen, that it was not; you know that slavery was the general condition of the poor man, who, deprived of the ownership of the soil, was also dispossessed of all right over his own labour. The rich man virtually said to him: "I am the master of the soil; I must take care of thy labour, without which the soil will produce me nothing. The soil and labour are but one. I myself will not work, because work fatigues me; and I will not treat with thee, because that would be to recognize thee as my equal, and to cede thee a part of my property in exchange for thy labour. I do not want to feel that I need thee; I do not wish to acknowledge that a man is necessary to me to make shoes for my feet and to clothe me: thou shalt, then, belong to me, thou shalt be my property as the land is, and as long as it suits me I shall take care that thou dost not die of hunger."

There is what has happened and has become a general fact. The labourer perished when the ownership of his labour went from him. He was reduced to the level of a domestic animal. The pagan world regarded that state of things as in no way evil. Was it, then, a small achievement to have established in the world the principle that man is never without

* *Cf.* Card. Manning: "In the conflict between dead and living capital, it is the rôle of the Church to protect the poor, the workers, who have accumulated the riches common to humanity."

ownership ? A man without property does not exist ; property and personality are one. Well, Jesus Christ has accomplished that ; He has rendered back to man for ever the proprietorship of his own labour ; He has made the poor man necessary to the rich man, by uniting them in a mutual bond of reciprocity. No land has ever flourished more than under the hand of the poor and the rich united in a partnership of mutual aid and thereby stipulating for the fertility of nature. All of you who are listening to me are children of that joyful union ; all that you are you owe to it. Without that unlooked-for change in the régime of property, the majority of us would be slaves, myself as well as you ; I should not be speaking to you from the pulpit, and you would not be listening to the language of right and duty.

Ungrateful men who deny Jesus Christ, who fancy that you are preparing for a greater work than His by attacking proprietorship, even that of labour, it is fortunate for you that the power of the Gospel prevails over your own. Every hour of your dignity, and of your liberty, is an hour which is preserved to you in spite of yourselves, which you owe to the power of Jesus Christ. If some day His Cross were to sink on the horizon, like a falling star, the same causes which formerly produced slavery would inevitably produce it again ; the domain of land and the domain of labour would, by an invincible

attraction, reunite in the same hands, and poverty, enslaved by wealth, would present to the astonished world the spectacle of a degradation from which it has emerged only by a miracle perpetually existing before our eyes.

That miracle weighs heavily upon you, I know; you ingeniously ask in what page of the Gospel slavery has been positively denounced and abolished. Great God! in no one page, but in every one of them. Jesus Christ did not say one single word which was not a condemnation of slavery, which did not break off a link of the chains of mankind. When He called Himself the Son of man, He emancipated man; when He said, *Love thy neighbour as thyself*, He emancipated man; when He chose fishermen for His apostles, He emancipated man; when He died for all without distinction, He emancipated man. Accustomed as you are to legal enactments and mechanical revolutions, you ask Jesus Christ for the decree which has changed the world; you wonder that you do not meet with it in history, formulated in some such words as these: "On such a day, at such an hour, when the clock of the Tuileries will have struck so many times, there shall be no more slaves." Such are your modern ways of proceeding; but remark also what a denial time gives to them, and understand that God, Who does nothing without the free concurrence of man, employs in the revolution He prepares a form of language more

full of respect for us and more certain of its efficacy. St Paul, initiated into the patient secrets of Divine action, wrote to the Corinthians: *Let every man abide in the same calling in which he was called. Wast thou called, being a bondman? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather* (1 Cor. vii. 20–21). Those very words were as solemn an act of deliverance as these: *I, Paul, an old man, and now a prisoner of Jesus Christ, beseech you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my chains, whom I have sent back not now as a slave, but, instead of a slave, a most dear brother* (Philem. v.). The Evangelical enfranchisement of man was thus accomplished; it thus abides, and is thus propagated, by an insensible infusion of justice and charity which enters into the soul of man and transforms it without violence, so that the hour of the revolution is never known. The world before Jesus Christ did not know that the proprietorship of labour was essential to man; the world regenerated by Jesus Christ has known and practised it: that is all.*

But the ownership of labour is not sufficient to

* In the course of the debate on Socialism in the House of Commons, in July, 1923, Sir John Simon pertinently asked whether the Socialistic State would allow the right to strike, and whether labour would be conscripted.

Cf. Robert Blatchford, in the *Illustrated Sunday Herald* (April 22, 1923): "I am not an individualist at all, and I have never been converted from Socialism. But careful observation of facts for the last twelve years or so has convinced me that Socialism will not work, and a study of Mr Henry Ford's methods has provided what seems to me as good a substitute as we may hope for in this imperfect world."

enable adequate provision to be made for the necessities of the poor. The children of the poor, the sick poor, the aged poor, cannot live by their labour, and very often the able-bodied labourer cannot find work. Jesus Christ, then, had to create a secondary ownership for them. Where was He to find this? Evidently it could only be found in the land: but the land belonged to the rich; and that proprietary right of theirs to the land cannot be touched without reducing the whole human race to a state of servitude. What resource, then, was there? Jesus Christ has discovered one; He has taught us a principle which regulates and controls the use of property, which prevents selfishness on the part of the rich and secures to all men a share in the common patrimony. This principle (which was even more unknown to the pagan world than the doctrine of man's inalienable ownership of his labour) declares that no one has a right to the fruits of ownership beyond the measure of his legitimate needs.* God, in the first place, gave the earth to man to supply his wants. Every other use of it is a selfish and parricidal use; a use ministering to sensuality, avarice and pride, vices reprobated by God, which doubtless He has not desired to strengthen and consecrate in instituting the rights of property.

* *Cf.* J. A. Ryan, D.D., *op. cit.*: "From St Paul (2 Cor. viii. 14) to St Basil; from St Basil to St Thomas of Aquin; and from St Thomas to Pope Leo XIII, the Christian teaching has been that superfluous goods are a trust to be administered for the benefit of the needy."

It is true that his needs vary with man's indefinitely varying position; and on that account the Gospel has not mathematically regulated the point at which the proper use ends and the abuse begins. Man would have done this; God did not consider Himself a sufficiently good mathematician for it, or rather, in this, as in all else, He has respected our liberty. But the Evangelic law is none the less clear and firm: wherever the legitimate need expires, there also expires the legitimate use of property. What remains is the patrimony of the poor, in justice as in charity ;* the rich man is but the depositary and the administrator of it. If selfish calculations deceive him as to his debt to the poor, if he escapes from it by the enjoyment of luxury increasing with his fortune, or by avarice that makes him grow constantly more anxious about the future in proportion as he has less occasion for anxiety, then woe to him! Not in vain is it

*Cf. John Rickaby, S.J., *loc. cit.*: "Recent theologians say that when the rich man neglects a clear obligation to give alms he sins, but against charity, not against justice; for the money withheld by him has never been made the property of the destitute claimant. . . . Moralists distinguish ownership of a property from the use of it; the two are separable and are often separated in practice. . . . But an analysis other than the one approved in our recognized text-books of moral theology is worth notice. By at least an implied consent of the community for the common good, certain individuals appropriate certain things out of the common stock. Now, suppose the appropriation to be not absolute, but limited by future claims of charity. Then so much property belongs to A, till, in a future emergency, a portion of it will pass to B as his by right of necessity. Some way has been prepared for this theory by St Thomas when he refers the division of property among individuals not simply to nature, but to a foundation only in nature upon which men build up forms of agreement by *quasi* contract."

written : *Woe to you that are rich !* (Luke vi. 24). God will exact a rigorous account from him at the day of judgment ; the tears of the poor will be shown to him ; he will see them in the fierce light of vengeance, because he has never been willing to see them in the light of justice and charity. If he was the legitimate proprietor of his fortune, he will also be the legitimate proprietor of his damnation.

I do not stop short, Gentlemen, at the terrible menaces so often repeated in the Gospel against those who unjustly withhold what is the property of the indigent ; for those menaces are but the least guarantee of the rights of the poor. It was not fear that has founded on earth the supplementary ownership of the poor, it was the unction of Jesus Christ penetrating into the heart of the rich and springing up there into sacred grain. This it is that has originated those assiduous attentions of which the ancient world had no idea ; those preoccupations of opulence in favour of misery ; those foundations of hospitals and refuges, of almshouses, under every form and under every name ; those ears open to catch every groan that has a new sound, which calls for some new invention of charity ; those personal visits to the destitute and the stricken ; those kind words springing from a fountain of love that is never dried up ; that communion of riches and poverty which, from morning to evening, from the age that is closing

to the age that is beginning, mingles all classes, all ranks, all rights, all duties, all thoughts, the theatre with the Church, the cottage with the mansion, birth with death, engendering charity even in crime, and drawing forth even from prostitution its tears and its alms.

I admit that a great part of this spectacle is hidden ; not every eye has the gift to perceive it, and only the eye of God alone sees it all. On this account it is easy to accuse the harshness of the rich and the powerlessness of Jesus Christ. It is for us, Christians, priests of Jesus Christ, who hold the secret of so many good works, to bear witness to that which we see, without ever ceasing to quicken the hand that is growing weary or the heart that forgets its duty. Are there not here, among the young men who are listening to me, some representatives of that Society of St Vincent de Paul which has spread all over France and even beyond the confines of France ? Who is there among you who does not see the poor face to face, who does not know how to listen to them and to speak to them ? Which of you has not warmed his faith by the tattered garments of misery ? Who, ascending in the evening those wretched stairs, and knocking at the door of grief and pain, has not sometimes heard Jesus Christ answer him from within by a conquered temptation, and say to him : Well done ?

Jesus Christ has restored to the poor the

ownership of their labour, and He has created for them a secondary ownership in the superfluous wealth of the rich: but was that enough? You, Christians, who have the sentiments of God, you will say, No. Whilst I have been speaking, you have been comparing in your own mind the condition of the poor with that of the rich, and you have felt that, after all, the difference is great, and that something is yet wanting to the work of Christ. You are right. Man wants more than bread, he wants dignity. He is, by his very nature, a dignity. Who is there among us who does not feel this strongly, and who does not aspire to a state of greatness capable of satisfying this instinct he feels within him? We do not deceive ourselves in this matter; we are children of a royal race; we are descended from a place where domination is of right; and it is just that we should feel stirring within us the remains of our first majesty. Alas! in exile the prince that has lost a throne never loses the memory of it; men have remarked on the brow of every dethroned monarch a wound of grief that can never be healed. Well! we are of the number of those exiles of exalted race; yes, to the letter, and in all the rigour of the expression, we are dethroned kings, children of God, destined one day to sit down at the right hand of our Father and to reign with Him. This being the case, has the poor man the same measure of glory and of power as

belongs to us? And can he do without it if he has it not? Can he live without dignity? No, a thousand times, no. I do not admit existence without royalty. Now, where is the royalty of the poor? Where is the royalty of that man who performs the most lowly offices for his daily bread? Where is it? Where is his crown? Who will dress it anew and restore it to him? Who, Gentlemen, who? Jesus Christ; the Gospel: be assured that they have provided for it.

See! Jesus Christ comes. He comes, the Man restored and renewed in glory, to give it back to us. Humanity, which is waiting for Him, is not one, it is divided into two camps: on the left the rich, on the right the poor, a space between. Jesus Christ descends; behold Him! Which way will He turn? He will pass over to the side of the poor, with His royalty and His divinity. *He is poor* (Zach. ix. 9), cried the Prophet on seeing Him coming from afar; and He declares His own mission, saying: *The Lord hath sent Me to preach the Gospel to the poor* (Luke iv. 18). St John the Baptist, His precursor, sends his disciples to question Him: *Art Thou*, they ask Him, *He that art to come, or do we look for another?* Christ answers: *Go and relate to John what you have heard and seen. The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again* (Matt. xi. 4–5). Is that all? No;

listen ! listen ! *The poor have the Gospel preached to them !* That is to say : knowledge, light, dignity are restored to that portion of mankind who had been entirely without them. Jesus Christ never grows weary of associating Himself with the poor ; and, ignoring wealth whenever He meets it on His way, He exclaims with Divine tenderness : *I give thanks to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to the little ones* (Matt. xi. 25). In fine, He established between the poor and Himself a bond of union which is their guarantee of respect so long as the world shall last : *Whatever you will have done,* He says, *to the least of these My brethren, you shall have done it unto Me* (Matt. xxv. 40).*

You understand now, Gentlemen, the strange charm that is attached to poverty in the eyes of the Christian. If, not content with helping and loving the poor, the Christian aspires to be poor himself ; if he sells his patrimony in order to distribute it to his suffering brethren ; if St Francis of Assisi renounces his paternal heritage that he may traverse the world with a staff and

* *Cf.* F. Ozanam, *Civil. au 5me siècle* : " At pagan Rome, almsgiving was not the duty of the individual but the right of all. But Christianity inverted the rule, and in its economy charity was not the right of any person but the duty of the whole community. Benevolence became a sacred duty, a precept and not merely a counsel. But if Christianity made almsgiving a duty towards the poor, it was towards that nameless and universal poverty which was in fact Christ Himself in the persons of the destitute. He was the sole creditor and judge of the tribunal to which the rich would be summoned who had abused their trust."

a wallet; if Charlemagne washes the dishes of Monte Cassino; if so many kings, queens, princes, princesses, abandon all in order to embrace voluntary poverty, you now know the secret of all this. Jesus Christ, descending from on high, became poor Himself; He has made of poverty and of love a mixture which intoxicates man, and to which all generations come in their turn to drink. Each poor man is Jesus Christ Himself,—Jesus Christ Who has loved so much! How shall I pass him by without a sensation of respect and love?*

O potent philosophers! I see clearly your objection; you will say to me: "But all that is purely metaphysical; there is not a trace of reality in the whole thing." Well, there are neither legislative decrees there, nor heavy artillery to cause them to be respected, nor even common sense, if you will; there is there only a revolution of love, a revolution which has been accomplished with nothing. This is precisely what strikes me most forcibly. O academicians! men of talent, legislators, princes, prophets,

* *Cf.* F. Sidgwick, *Ballads of Robin Hood and other Outlaws* (London, 1912): "Robin Hood the yeoman outlaw never existed in the flesh. As the goddess Athena sprang from the head of Zeus, Robin Hood sprang from the imagination of the English people. After reflecting on his essential characteristics—his love for the poor, his courteous robbery of the higher orders both spiritual and temporal, his loyalty to the king, his freedom with the king's deer, and his esteem of all women for the sake of the Virgin Mary—an Englishman should be the first to resent any attempt to identify so truly popular a hero with one of several historical nonentities, or with a member of the aristocracy, or worst of all, with an Aryan sun-myth."

listen to me, if you can. Rich humanity trampled poor humanity underfoot ; I belonged to poor humanity then, and I do now. In pity, then, cause rich humanity to respect poor humanity ; make the rich love the poor ; make the rich think of the poor ; create Sisters of Charity to dress my wounds ; Brothers of the Schools to instruct me ; Brothers of Mercy to redeem me from slavery ; do this, and I will acquit you of all the rest. Jesus Christ has done it, and that is why I love Him ; He has done it with nothing, and that is why I believe Him to be God. Each one has his own peculiar ideas.

Jesus Christ had a third singular idea concerning the poor : He feared lest they might consider themselves unfortunate on account of their election to poverty, and He therefore pronounced the adorable words with which He commenced His Sermon on the Mount : *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven* (Matt. v. 3). You think, perhaps, that this means : Blessed are those who are despised upon earth, because they will be honoured in Heaven ; blessed are those who suffer upon earth, because they will rejoice in Heaven ; blessed are those who are of no account here on earth, because they will be great in Heaven ! It is true, this is in part the sense of those ineffable words ; but it is not their whole meaning. They mean also : Blessed are the poor in spirit, because the kingdom of heaven is

theirs even here below; because the unction of blessedness will descend into their soul, will enlarge it, will elevate it above material things, and will fill it even in the midst of destitution! Jesus Christ has thereby revealed to us a truth which is not only of the supernatural order but also pertains to the moral order, and even to the purely economic order: that happiness is a thing of the soul and not of the senses; that its source lies in devotedness and not in enjoyment, in love and not in sensuality. Now, devotedness belongs to the poor by birthright; and love, too often denied to the rich, dwells willingly in the simple heart of the artisan, who has never been waited on or adored, who has never wrapped up his whole being in pride, and who, knowing how to give himself, knows what it is to love and to be loved. The Gospel, in turning man's thoughts and desires away from the earth and in bringing him to regard the things that are within him, accorded with a disposition of nature itself. It infused into the poor, with the joys of holiness, the lesser but still desirable joys of the human order. It has made happy communities—a rare spectacle in our days, but one which, thank God, has not yet disappeared. Have you never, on a Sunday, met the people of a Breton village on their way to church, the old man proceeding gaily, the young husband with his bride on his arm, youths and little children bearing to God their vigorous and artless health; all their

countenances and demeanour showing serenity, pride, self-possession, peace of conscience, and not a shadow of regret or of envy? The man of the cottage smiles at the great man of the chateau; respect does but bring upon his lips a tinge of contentment, and contentment is only the terrestrial expression of a higher and more deeply-seated sentiment.*

Elsewhere, Gentlemen, it is very different; envy has furrowed every brow and lighted up all eyes. How could it be otherwise? Jesus Christ had founded the proprietorship of the poor, their dignity, and their blessedness: you

Cf. Lacordaire, *Thoughts and Teachings* (Dublin, 1892): "When men have lost faith in the words, *Blessed are the poor*, and the innumerable works have been destroyed whereby were accomplished those other words, *The poor have the Gospel preached to them*, the abyss must needs be filled up. The first revolution filled it up as best it could, with the property of the nobility and of the clergy, and by means of the law which established amongst families the equal distribution of inheritances; but the gulf soon devoured that prey. From the very food that has been cast into it there has sprung a race of proletarians still more numerous and more hungry; they cry out in their turn; they demand their share; they demand it of those who are to-day the sole possessors of it, of those who are called, with terrible contempt, the bourgeoisie. What, in fact, is a bourgeois in the eyes of the proletarians? He is the heir of the bishops, of the abbots, of the nobles. He is an avaricious noble, amassing wealth for his family, without retainers and without compassion. He is an abbot who shuts the gate of the monastery against the poor man, while throwing him at most a miserable crust. He is a prevaricating bishop, who has deliberately extinguished in the heart of the poor man the faith and hope and charity which nourished him, the only good he possessed, and which prevented his envying those more fortunate than himself. How was it possible that property in such hands should not again be exposed to overthrow? How could it be otherwise than that the question of liberty, far from being insignificant at the present time for the people, should be transformed into a civil war between those who possess and those who possess not, between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie?" And Dean W. R. Inge, *Outspoken Essays*, 2nd series: "With democracy one thing excites enthusiasm—the pillage of the minority, exactly as Plato told us."

have altered all three. You have decreased the ownership of the poor by increasing property in the hands of unbelievers more or less returned to pagan egotism ; you have diminished the dignity of the poor, in attacking Jesus Christ Who is its source ; you have lessened the blessedness of the poor by persuading them that wealth is everything, and that happiness, the daughter of the purse, is assessed and inscribed in the ledgers of your counting-houses. You will reap the fruits of your labours. This country has many wounds ; but the most grievous of all is, perhaps, the economic wound, that mad rage which precipitates all men upon the lean and sickly prey which we call earth. Return, return to the infinite : the infinite alone is vast enough for man. Neither railways, nor high chimneys for your wonderful steam-engines, nor any other invention of yours, will add one inch to the extent of the earth ; even were it as lavish as it is niggardly, as limitless as it is narrow, it would still be nothing but an unworthy theatre of the desires of men. The soul alone has bread for all and joy to all eternity. Steer your course to this haven in full sail ; restore Jesus Christ to the poor, if you desire to render to them their true patrimony ; all that you may do for the poor without Jesus Christ will but increase their inordinate desires, their pride, and their misery.*

* *Cf.* G. K. Chesterton, *St Francis of Assisi* (London, 1923), pp. 111, 184.

IX

Catholicism and Civil Authority

I have already dealt with the influence of Catholicism upon natural society as regards the elementary rights of man, as regards ownership of property, and as regards family relationships. In all three respects Catholicism has exercised a healthful action upon society, by protecting the weak against the strong. But there is another element of human society where there is no longer only question of protecting the weak against the strong, a complex element in which is found sometimes a superabundance of strength, and sometimes a superabundance of weakness; I refer to authority. Authority possesses the peculiar character of being by turns that which is most strong and that which is most weak; one day it may have the power to crush everything, and on the morrow it may find itself trampled underfoot, so that its whole history in this world might be summed up in that saying of a famous orator :* "There is but one step from the Capitol to the Tarpeian Rock." The Capitol

* Mirabeau.

intoxicates, the Tarpeian Rock abases; and authority oscillates between these two limits, both of which are alike disastrous to it. It is needful to protect it against the one and the other, and to secure to it between these two rocks equilibrium and enduring stability. Let us see what natural society has of itself been able to do to ensure to authority power and durability, and how far Catholicism has brought assistance to natural society. Hitherto, Gentlemen, in addressing you, I have been walking on hot ashes; to-day I shall have to tread upon burning coals. I do not shrink from the task. I have difficult things to say; I shall say them with as much forbearance as frankness, but I shall say them.

No real society can be conceived as being without unity, without order, without power. By the effect of unity, millions of men divided by interests, passions, ideas, places, and time, meet in one single centre, and move and act as if there were for them but one time, one place, one idea, one passion, one interest, one life. By the effect of order, the mutual relations of the citizens, as they are defined by the laws, are maintained with inviolable regularity; and if, here and there, in the fluctuating shadow of the social masses, some evil-doer sets himself to attack recognized rights, the spirit of order which pervades society stops him and brings him to justice. By the effect of power, citizens dis-

persed over a vast territory remain tranquil, unmindful of the enemy. Not one of them, so to speak, is at the frontier; and behind that rampart, which seems not to be defended, all sleep in peace, because there is somewhere a force which watches, which, even in the silence of the night, on its solemn couch, has a listening ear and, by one movement of its lips, will magically transport against the enemy an army in which will be found the courage, the fortune and the majesty of the country.

That, Gentlemen, is a picture of society such as unity, order and power make it. But who will give it this unity? Who will create for it this order and power? We must always come to a few men, and generally to a single man, in whom are accumulated and reside power, order, and unity. And just think of it! Thirty millions of men breathing in one single breast, stamped upon one single face, and confiding to one single man all their strength together with all their glory and all their destinies! But how could one man, how could several men firmly appropriate to themselves such greatness and carry it on from one age to another, making it permanent and equal to all the wants of society; so fashioning and regulating it that it will pass with unchanged character from the brow of a hero to the brow of an infant, from success to reverse, and charging it to form, with the fragility of a life, the immortality of a nation?

It will perhaps seem to some of you that nothing is simpler, and that a loyal army under a capable general has, at the bayonet's point, the whole secret of durable government. But a faithful army and a brave general, like all other human things, are in the capricious hand of fortune, and history bears witness that no form of government has been less solid and stable than government by soldiers. By a special providence of God (for which we should always thank Him), as soon as the helmet governs, unity, order and power receive their death-blow. After the Roman Senate, wrapped in its civil toga, had for a long time provided for the stability of the people-king, from the day that the power of the legions succeeded the Senate's there was nothing more to be seen in Rome but masters arriving from the Euphrates or the Rhine, and entering by the triumphal arch only to go out by the common sewer. The people, amused by these sights, beheld the arrival of the newly elect, and applauded him with all the more enthusiasm because they already saw upon his brow, through the aureole of sovereignty, the place reserved for the insult of the morrow.

Military force, so imposing at the first glance, is the very last to be capable of establishing unity, order and power, because, being more material than spiritual, it is to life what the human organism is to the blood; it needs a foreign element to animate and direct it, without

which it falls of its own weight, like a rock which knows not what it does, or becomes scattered, like dust that flies before the wind. Society is not the offspring of violence, it is the offspring of intelligence and of liberty, and respects nothing but what springs from this twofold source. It is not force which founds society, it is authority.

But what is authority? Authority is a superiority which produces obedience and reverence: first, obedience, that is to say, the spontaneous submission of one man's will to another's. "Captain, place your men there, and defend the position at the cost of your life." —"Your orders shall be obeyed, general."* There, Gentlemen, you have obedience; and you feel that it is the obedience of a free man, where he that commands and he that obeys are equally great. The one has found it perfectly simple to require a life for his country, the other has found it quite as simple to give it; the one conceived the act of devotedness only because he was capable of performing it himself, the other was capable of performing it only because he conceived it. It was an action and a reaction of two souls that appreciated each other at their just worth. When the famous Spartans at Thermopylae were preparing to die for the welfare of Greece, they carved on a rock this inscription: "Go, traveller, tell Sparta that we

* After the victory of the Vendeans at Torfou, in 1793

died here in obedience to her sacred laws." Here again was obedience, and not an act of obedience carried beyond what was necessary, proper only for a few heroes, but such an obedience as is necessary for the existence of society, such an obedience as the Spartans exercised in their palmy days. All Sparta spoke at Thermopylae, the living as well as the dead; and there was not in the entire republic a soul which would not have responded to the spirit of the three hundred.

Without the spontaneous submission of the will to another's will, and even sometimes without an enthusiastic submission, unity is impossible, and order and power also. For how is it possible for so many separate wills to form but one, if there exist not a sovereign will which concentrates them in itself? How would order exist if all the various wills did not concur, through obedience, to maintain the relations established by the laws and incessantly threatened by the interests of the discontented? And how would there be power if each citizen be not ready, at the first word of command, to take up the post to which he is called?

Reverence is another element of authority, and as needful to it as obedience. For reverence is but respect mingled with love; and we do not long obey him who inspires in us neither love nor respect. The will finds it difficult enough to submit even when it sincerely loves and respects;

and if love and respect should be wanting, sooner or later it ceases to obey. Necessity or constraint will not suffice to secure obedience, and the first favourable occasion will be the signal for unity, order, and power to perish with authority. Any power that does not provoke obedience and reverence, prepares but its own dissolution.

But these principles do not carry us very far in the unravelling of the mystery which occupies our attention. If obedience and reverence, in founding authority, beget unity, order, and power, what is it which is to produce obedience and reverence? I can easily understand that unity, order, and power may be the result of obedience and reverence; but how can one man, or several men, inspire in thirty millions of men that obedience and reverence? There is the mystery. As regards this, the world before the coming of Christ was divided into two systems—the system of the East and the system of the West.

The Eastern system takes it for granted that man cannot obey man, for each man's will is as good as another's; that man cannot reverence man, for man is too insignificant before his fellow-man, too much akin to him by the infirmity of life and of death. Authority, then, must be higher than man; it must have an inaccessible quality, must partake of the prestige of omnipotence; there must be between the subject and the sovereign such a

gulf that the eye even should not dare to look beyond it; in short, the authority must be God. The East rested on that fiction, or rather on that reality, the only one which in its eyes constitutes power and renders it sacred and worthy of reverence. What has resulted from it? Obedience and reverence, I admit; but an abject obedience and reverence the very history of which fills us with horror. The East would not submit to a man, esteeming such a submission degrading, and it has bowed down to monsters. For the fiction of Godhead did not change the nature of the idol who profited by it, or rather, it did change, but only to corrupt and degrade. He sank under the weight of the Divinity heaped upon his shoulders, and for want of anything to restrain or check him in any direction, he pushed his pride and his immorality to the point of extravagance.

But did the East, even at this cost, obtain unity, order, power, and stability of government? By no means. In no other part of the world have the revolutions of the people and of dynasties presented a more bloody spectacle, or one of more frequent occurrence. A time comes when society gives way beneath the weight of crowned madness, and then comes to pass what is implicitly stipulated in the contract between peoples and potentates in the East, which Count de Maistre has felicitously expressed in these words: "Do as you like, and when we

have had enough we will cut your throat." Rarely have Eastern people failed to perform this part of the contract.

The Western system is quite different from that of the East, more judicious, more true, worthy of succeeding, if man alone could succeed in such vast matters. Westerns consent to be governed by a man, and consequently to vow obedience and reverence to him ; but, nevertheless, they are afraid of him, are afraid to place in his hands the sceptre and the sword ; they will that he shall be great—yet not too great ; powerful—yet within certain limits. The West calculates, weighs, limits the power. It seeks to create between the prince and the people a species of fusion which shall partake of the soul of both, so that sovereignty shall have some part in obedience, and obedience in sovereignty. Such were the Republics of Greece, governed in their days of glory by citizens momentarily chosen from the crowd to exercise authority as representatives of the city. Obedience and reverence were doubtless produced in this complicated system, but not sufficiently. The seat of power was too mobile and too narrow to provide that stability of which the nations stood in need.

How long did the Roman Republic, that most remarkable and perfect example of this type of régime, last ? Between the dagger that killed Lucretia and the dagger that killed Cæsar, how

many centuries do you count? About five. At the end of that period, having become master of the world, the Roman Senate sent a message to a captain called Cæsar, that he must not pass beyond the limits of his military department. Cæsar reflected for a moment—and passed. At that first act of disobedience all was over; Rome existed no longer, or if she continued to bear the name, it was but to fall from Augustus to Tiberius, from Tiberius to Caius, from Caius to Nero, from Nero to Heliogabalus, from the Western type of government to the Eastern. Behold the greatness that was Rome: that profane masterpiece of the Western world, lasting five hundred years! a little more than a third of the duration of the French monarchy! There was, then, an insufficiency of obedience and reverence in that system, and consequently an insufficiency of unity, of order, and of power, and hence an insufficiency of social stability.

But what was the cause of the failure of both the Eastern and the Western system? The rock on which they both alike foundered was that in each system there was only man, nothing but man. Now, man by himself is incapable of commanding obedience and veneration in the measure that is necessary for the government of a community; he is too small for so great a task. In vain do people give him the title of god, in vain is he addressed as Your Eternity; he will still remain a man; and however great

he may chance to be, be he Titus or Nerva, he may have as successors illustrious fools or madmen in whom the superhuman fiction will be but a folly the more. Dynasties succeed to dynasties, and the fate of the people follows the fate of their rulers. Let us learn to comprehend our own weakness, and to deplore it. A portion of mankind desired gods for chiefs, and the gods have perished; another chose men, and the men have succumbed. Too great or too little, they have sunk by insufficiency or by excess, for man had but man. Let us seek the remedy in Him Whom we have already seen to be so powerful to heal our maladies; let us see what Catholicism has done to inspire in mankind that obedience and reverence which give stability to civil authority.

Catholicism has laid open in the world two inexhaustible sources of obedience and reverence: the one public, the other secret.

The public source of obedience and reverence which the Catholic Church has opened in the world is the authority of the hierarchy. The papacy, the episcopate, the priesthood of the Catholic Church have for nineteen centuries been obeyed and venerated by the greatest union of men on earth, this obedience and veneration resting upon no force but simply upon the free consent of the faithful who voluntarily recognize the Catholic hierarchy as clothed with Divine authority. Without any other resource than

persuasion, the Catholic hierarchy wins a homage such as no human majesty in any time or place has ever obtained. The homage is rendered freely, for at any moment each one of the faithful may refuse or retract his homage, and yet that homage goes on unalterable and sacred in spite of the vicissitudes of favour or fortune.* The fact is palpable ; it is strikingly visible ; it needs no demonstration. But if you need a demonstration, or rather an example, recall to mind what took place here in France at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

We had destroyed everything, even the past ; in our hatred for every object of pious honour, we had opened the tombs in which the great servants of our fatherland reposed in the arms of death and guarded only by our memories, and for the sole pleasure of defying majesty even in its coffin we had cast their ashes to the winds and exposed them to the public scorn. Never, in any period of history, had obedience and reverence been further removed from the heart of men. An old man† appeared among us at that time ; he had been summoned by a young

* *Cf.* Hilaire Belloc, *Europe and the Faith*, pp. 241–242 : " The hierarchy of the Church, its unity and its sense of discipline, was the chief civil institution and the chief binding social force of the Dark Ages. Side by side with it went the establishment of the monastic institution. The great order of St Benedict formed a framework of living points on which was stretched the moral life of Europe. . . . Meanwhile the Catholic hierarchy as an institution —I have already called it by a violent metaphor a civil institution— at any rate as a political institution—remained absolute above the social disintegration of the time."

† Pope Pius VII.

man* who had all the prestige of glory, but who wanted to kneel before the Vicar of Christ to receive through that abasement the seal of a higher authority. The old man came armed only with his blessing; he came into the midst of that people who had in one single day trampled underfoot all the generations of their kings: he appeared at the windows of the Tuileries. Bearing upon his brow more traces of sorrow than of years, no sooner was he seen than all Paris, touched by a magic influence that opens all hearts in their best and noblest spot, flocked to him to possess a happiness they no longer knew—the happiness of kneeling for that blessing which for so many centuries had brought men to their knees. And, whilst this spectacle was passing without, in a higher region, even within the Palace of the Tuileries, a celebrated man who died a short time ago, touched his neighbour, and said to him, with joy and admiration: "At last, Sir, we see an authority! Behold an authority!"

The secret source of obedience and reverence which has been discovered by Catholicism is confession.

Every man, whoever he may be, prince in power or in knowledge, if he would have any part in the mystery of Christ, must kneel to confess his sins, to ask for pardon and to receive penance: an exercise of obedience and reverence

* The Emperor Napoleon I.

which reveals him to himself, purifies him, humanizes him, and bends him without breaking him.* For he is free in that action more than in any other; no power is assumed over him that he does not give of his own free-will; he can rise and go if the truth that he seeks seems to him too hard, or the peace and honour of conscience too dearly purchased.† But he persists voluntarily, once he has known the charm of humility and of sincerity between God and himself; he learns with joy, in the obedience and veneration which he has chosen, to render obedience even where he has no choice, to render reverence even where God requires it by

Cf. Bossuet, *Funeral Oration upon Henrietta Duchess of Orleans*: "Madame summons the priests rather than the physicians. She asks to receive the sacraments of the Church; penance with compunction; the Eucharist with fear, but with trust; the sacred anointing of the dying with pious eagerness. Far from being frightened by this sacrament, she wishes it to be administered whilst she is fully conscious: she listens to the explanation of these holy ceremonies, of these apostolic prayers, which, by a sort of divine magic, suspend the most violent pains, and make the person oblivious of death who listens to them with faith: she enters into the spirit of them, she corresponds with them; she peacefully submits her senses to the holy oil, or rather to the Blood of Jesus, which flows so abundantly with this precious liquid." And Lord Rosebery, *Napoleon, the Last Phase*, chap. xiii: "A remark which Napoleon lets fall at St Helena explains probably his normal state of mind. 'Only a madman,' he says one day, 'declares that he will die without a confessor. There is so much that one does not know, that one cannot explain.'"

† *Cf.* Sir Hall Caine, *loc. cit.*: "What a power in confession! Although not a Catholic, I should be blind if I did not see how deep is that need of the human soul which the confessional seeks to fill. And a confession of wrong-doing publicly made, no outside force compelling a man to make it, is surely one of the most sublime spectacles in human life. No judgment of the most righteous judge from the bench can be half so solemn as the judgment which a guilty man, in such circumstances, pronounces upon himself from the dock, for behind it is a power greater than the law, or the fear of the law—God." Also F. Coppée, *La Bonne Souffrance*, Eng. trans. (London, 1900), chap. xviii.

a command which admits of no choice. The proud spirit consents to be dominated; the wild heart, ever ready to revolt, accepts unity, order, and power under the only form possible, the form of authority. Confession, linked to the public action of the hierarchy, has created in the world an enormous store of obedience and reverence,* but of spontaneous obedience and reverence which are the effect of conviction, which have been responsible for a remarkable modification in the reciprocal relations of the subject and the sovereign.

The Catholic spirit has produced in the world, even in the sphere of human authority, something altogether new, altogether unknown to antiquity, the middle term between the Eastern system and the Western system: it has produced the Christian monarchy.

The Christian monarchy had in each country a unique chief, the centre and representative of unity, of order, and of power. This chief sprang from the heart of society, by a natural origin and growth, as the oak springs from a germ which develops itself by the process of time. Nothing harsh or violent was felt in his coming to power. Men never contested his right to their obedience. They might in certain cases refuse to obey him, if the command was illegal, that is to say, contrary to the law of God or the law of the

* *Cf.* Guizot: "The Catholic Church is the great school of reverence."

nation. The law of God and the law of the nation formed a double check on sovereignty, while, nevertheless, neither the general right of commanding nor the duty of obeying was disputed.* Reverence linked itself to obedience to make of the Christian chief a father as well as a magistrate. The people pardoned the faults of the prince, as the child pardons a father's weakness; they showed indulgence for the leaven of humanity existing in him as well as in the lowest of mortals. In fine, all their sentiments were embraced in a final sentiment which formed the first foundation of the Christian monarchy, and which was called fidelity. The sovereign had confidence in his people, and the people had confidence in their sovereign. They joined hands in mutual trust and fidelity, not for a day, but before God and for ever, in the name of the dead and of the living, in the name of their ancestors and of their posterity. The prince descended peacefully into the tomb, leaving his children to the guardianship of his people; and the people, seeing the children young and strengthless, protected them until the time came when those children should in their turn protect the nation.

* *Cf.* Chesterton, *Hist. of Eng.*: "Medieval monarchy, though only a phase of medieval rule, was thoroughly represented in the idea that the ruler had a right to rule as a voter has a right to vote. He might govern wrong, but unless he governed horribly and extravagantly wrong, he retained his position of right; as a private man retains his right to marriage and locomotion unless he goes horribly and extravagantly off his head."

Honour was another sentiment on which the Christian monarchy reposed ; a sentiment newer and more absolutely unknown to antiquity than even fidelity. Honour was, on the part of the Christian, an exalted view of himself, a sense of his own nobility. By honour, the Christian approximated to his master ; he had more than rights in regard to him ; his personality was not obliterated in the presence of his master, but maintained itself with an infinite delicacy which was the thing the most respected in the world at a time when so many other things were respected. Honour protected all and saved all. It played, especially in France, a rôle almost sovereign, which caused Montesquieu to say that France was a monarchy governed by honour.

Would you care to have a few examples which will help you to feel the difference between Christian sovereignty and the ancient sovereignty ? I will not even choose them from our best epochs, but from a period when Christian monarchy was near its setting.

Louis XIV was talking with his courtiers in those apartments of Versailles which henceforth paintings alone are considered great enough to occupy ; the conversation turned on the Shah of Persia and on some recent executions of his nobles which he had sanctioned. The king said : " This is to reign ! " " Yes, Sire," replied the Duke d'Estrées, who had been ambassador in

Persia ; " but I have seen three Persian monarchs strangled in my time."

In the reign of Louis XV a minister* fell into disgrace. The next day the king, coming out of his bedchamber and finding the great apartments deserted, asked of a servant : " Where is the court, then ? " " Sire," answered the lackey, " the court is at Chanteloup." Chanteloup was the country-house of the disgraced minister, and was forty leagues from Versailles. In those days, Gentlemen, men travelled forty leagues to visit a disgraced minister : there are times when they do not walk four yards for that purpose.

Louis XVI, of painful and venerable memory, was making a journey in Normandy. A peasant woman approached him and asked permission to kiss his hand. " And why not my cheek ? " replied the monarch.

Such, Gentlemen, in the Christian monarchy, was the familiarity of the great and the poor with the sovereign. Obedience and reverence became transmuted into fidelity tempered by honour. Christian manners were very different from those of Asia, and no less different from those of ancient Greece and Rome. All was new, as were Jesus Christ and His Church, whence those delicate relationships proceeded.

I add that liberty was also an element of the Christian monarchy.

Everyone knows how the Church laboured to

* The Duke de Choiseul (1719–1785).

maintain the rights of conscience under the Christian monarchy. In doing this she has doubtless encountered many obstacles; because in the free-will of man and in the clashing of earthly forces evil always finds the means of manifesting itself. But the Christian monarchy, considered in its divers phases, has none the less lent its aid to the Evangelic law and guaranteed its reign in favour of the weak. Each Christian country had its laws, its immunities, its associations defended against arbitrary power by a common force placed at the service of the poorest and the most humble, which gave them, with more regularity of life, a greater amount of dignity. No one was then alone; none found himself alone and disarmed in the presence of society as a whole or of those who represented it. In other times it had been found possible to use the name of liberty to gild the moral disarmament of the weak; the future will declare, still better than the present, on which side there was more justice and more real enfranchisement. But, from this very day, I am in the right when I conclude that under the Christian monarchy liberty was assured; and that, in order to define that institution, we must say, completing the words of Montesquieu: The Christian monarchy was a monarchy governed by fidelity, honour, and liberty.* It is possible, Gentlemen,

* *Cf.* Guizot, *op. cit.*: "In principle, Christianity maintains to authority its rights and its rank intact; without humbling it before liberty, Christianity yet recognizes the rights of liberty, and demands

that you have forgotten these things; but history has not forgotten them, and will some day proclaim them aloud.

How was this transformation brought about? How was it that this power became at the same time Divine and human? For this was its double character: it was obeyed and venerated as Divine, and yet it was recognized as human. It was superior and equal, father and brother at one and the same time. By what secret agency was it conducted to this point of perfection so far removed from the Eastern and Western systems? I will tell you in a few words.

The Gospel laid down the principle that man is too great to obey man, and that man, of his own inherent virtue, is too small to be venerated by man. This principle overthrew the Eastern system. But, on the other hand, the Gospel laid down that it is needful to obey God in man's person: *Serving as to the Lord, and not to men* (Eph. vi. 7). This principle overthrew the Western system. The prince is no longer the proxy of the people, he is the representative of Jesus Christ; men obey no longer only man, but Jesus Christ Himself, present and living in him whom society has elected to power. I say in him whom society has elected; for the Gospel did not deprive society of its natural right of election; it did not even decide as to

that these should be admitted; in fact, Christianity inspires men with a sentiment with which authority cannot dispense, respect."

whether the form of government should be a monarchy, an aristocracy, or a democracy.* It left the question of form and choice open to the experience and the logic of events; it said to the nations: "Place at your head a consul, a president, or a king, as you please; but remember that as soon as you have chosen your supreme authority God will enter into it. Power springs from the earth, as flowers spring up in a field, not all having the same crown and colour; the great matter is not the birth of power, but its consecration. When power has once issued forth from a nation, Jesus Christ will enter into

* *Cf.* Pope Leo XIII: "Various political governments have succeeded one another in France during the last century, each having its own distinctive form: the Empire, the Monarchy, and the Republic. By giving oneself up to abstractions one could at length conclude which is the best of these forms, considered in themselves; and in all truth it may be affirmed that each of them is good, provided it lead straight to the end—that is to say, to the common good, for which social authority is constituted—and finally, it may be added that, from the relative point of view, such and such a form of government may be preferable because of being better adapted to the character and customs of such or such a nation. In this order of speculative ideas, Catholics, like all other citizens, are free to prefer one form of government to another, precisely because no one of these social forms is, in itself, opposed to the principles of sound reason or to the maxims of Christian doctrine." See too Emile Faguet, *Mgr Dupanloup* (Paris, 1914), chap. vii; and Archbishop J. Ireland, *The Church and Modern Society* (St Paul, Minn., 1905), vol. i, chap. i.

The Spanish Jesuit Suarez (1548–1617), in whom Mackintosh recognizes one of the founders of international law, had the distinction of having one of his books publicly burned in London by order of James I. In that book, as well as in his treatise *De Legibus*, Suarez refuted the then popular Protestant theory of the Divine Right of Kings. Cardinal Bellarmine (1542–1621) also came into conflict with James I on the same subject. See Joseph Rickaby, S.J., *Political and Moral Essays* (New York, 1902), pp. 81–171.

Cf. also Lord Acton, *Lectures on Modern History* (London, 1918), p. 245: "The theory of government in France in the time of Louis XIV was that which Bossuet had borrowed from Hobbes and clothed in the language of Scripture." And Professor G. Lanson, *Bossuet* (Paris, 1890), chap. v.

it, will be its life, its glory, its strength ; you will have produced it, He will consecrate it. You will have produced it mortal, He will remove from it the seeds of death ; you will have made it small, He will make it great ; you will have made it in your own image, He will transform it into His own ; it will become God and man even as He."

You understand, the power will remain man ; if it has the benefit of Christ, it will have also the charge of Christ. However great it may be, it will have to reckon with the Gospel and with humanity, with Jesus Christ living elsewhere as well as in itself. If it governs by its Divine side, it is a human equal and a human brother by its human side. I have said before, in this pulpit, that we were the cousins of kings : many were much astonished at that expression. I retract it, then : we are not the cousins of kings, we are only their brothers. This is enough for us. It was sufficient to change all the relations between subjects and sovereigns, and to found the Christian monarchy with its triple element of fidelity, honour, and liberty. Between the prince and the people there was an authentic law superior to both, accepted by both, a mediator living in Heaven and upon earth, who was Jesus Christ. Louis XIV, notwithstanding all his pride, when the festival of Easter came, was obliged to render a solemn homage to the morality which he had outraged, and to repudiate

Mme de Montespan. It was needful for him to reckon sooner or later with the Gospel, even were it but upon his death-bed; and although that barrier might not always have sufficiently checked him, the prince was, even in the worst times, preserved from the extravagance of the East. No Catholic prince, even the very worst, has left behind him a name like the names of the East or of degenerate Rome.

This sad glory was reserved to heresy; it was necessary to break with Catholic society, that a Christian land could endure kings like Henry VIII of England, and like all those monsters* who have inaugurated in Europe the reign of the Muscovite power.

Gentlemen, the Christian monarchy no longer exists; it died out with Louis XIV, who was its last representative; not an irreproachable representative; not by any means a representative equal to Charlemagne and to St Louis; but, in fine, the last representative the Christian monarchy had. After him, the Gospel and Jesus Christ quitted the thrones of Europe; Rationalism, more or less disguised, has mounted there in their place, and with Rationalism, all those events of which the world, by a reaction which may be called legitimate, has been the theatre, the witness, and the actor.

Why has that great creation thus perished?

* Peter I, surnamed the Great, and his successors of the 18th century.

Because, in the first place, it was the offspring of truth, but not truth itself; the offpsring of justice and charity, but not justice and charity themselves. It was of the world, it was mingled with a human element, and it was impossible but that, sooner or later, by the force of things, there should become introduced into it some source of ruin and of annihilation. It has been so. If God had permitted the Christian monarchy, that ally of Catholic society, always to subsist side by side with it, you would have believed, or in the future it would perhaps have been believed, that the strength of the Church lay in a human power. It would have been said that Charlemagne, St Louis, or some other great prince had borne Christ and had created His destiny. This could not be. Time has, therefore, received from God permission to do its work here as elsewhere. But has time alone done it all? Is it alone responsible for the ruins we behold? Shall the respect which I owe to the ashes of the dead keep me from saying the whole truth? You know, I have not profited by the ideas of the present time to draw back from my duty; I have not been such a coward as to flatter your passions and your prejudices, and to sacrifice to them fourteen centuries of our country's history because those fourteen centuries do not resemble the fifty years of which you are the sons.*

* *Cf.* Fustel de Coulanges: "Patriotism is not only love of the soil, it is love of the past, it is reverence for the generations that have gone before us."

No, to everything its own glory, to every period its power; I have not abused the past; I shall not abuse the present age. I know why you do what you do; I know the reasons which support you, which give to your work a character which I am obliged to respect. I must do more, I must say in favour of our age that which ought to be said; I must say this distinctly, boldly, with as much independence as I have used in treating of the past.

The Christian monarchy was founded on an alliance of which Jesus Christ was the soul and the mediator. The day that sovereignty reached the point of abusing the obedience and reverence which had been communicated to it by the Gospel and Jesus Christ, that day sovereignty laid hands on itself, it dug a pit beneath its feet, it turned towards the East. Jesus Christ beheld it, He arose, He folded back again upon His breast those arms which had been crucified for us, He descended from the throne, and that Christian monarchy then became but an empty sepulchre, the ashes of which have been thrown to the winds. Christ was the force of it, it has not respected the liberty of Christ; the passions leagued themselves together to attack Christianity, Christianity has retired and departed. It has said to human society: "I have my eternal destinies; remain thou with time, and become what thou canst!"

And from this divorce, from this separation,

modern times have arisen, as a protest in favour of the Gospel and against the system of the East. They have arisen because, brotherhood having gone, paternity was no more, and honour and liberty were no longer secure.

Now what will happen? Will the Christian monarchy be reformed? Will it be under some other form that the Evangelic law will resume its empire in the world? I know not. But I do know that I despair not of Providence. Having found God in what has preceded me, I hope to find Him in what will follow me; and, to use an expression of a great German poet,* I am a citizen of the times to come.

* Schiller: "The century is not ripe for my ideal. I live as an earnest of the centuries to come."

X

Church and State

When the Catholic Church came to establish herself in the Roman Empire, she found there only one authority, the civil authority. The Emperors, the heirs of the Republic, had added to their titles of Cæsar and Augustus that of Sovereign Pontiff; and the Church, in establishing herself, set herself to deprive them of the title of Sovereign Pontiff and to raise by the side of the civil power a power purely spiritual. This she accomplished; and, from that time, these two powers have held their course side by side, sometimes supporting each other, sometimes struggling against each other, sometimes each leaving the other to take its own unheeded way.

But by what right has the Church come thus to share the power of the Cæsars, to cut in two the throne of the Emperors, to place the Apostolic throne by the side of the Imperial throne? By what right, I ask; for if an earthly throne found its way into this cathedral, would it not very soon succeed in displacing the Episcopal throne? Here is a question worthy of the close attention

of thoughtful minds, especially in view of the long, unceasing conflict which has gone on between these two powers, and in view of the mass of prejudices that have been heaped up against the Church, prejudices so strong that, as we listen to them, it seems as if all that the Church possesses were but a concession of time to eternity. But before examining by what right the power of the Church has established herself, it is necessary for us to know the nature and extent of that power, in order that we may be enabled to appreciate its right.

Now, the nature of a power is determined by its object; and the object of the Church's power is clearly marked out in these Divine words: *Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe whatever I have commanded you* (Matt. xxviii. 19–20). Teach truth, diffuse grace, cause virtue to be practised: truth, an invisible and spiritual thing, of which we have but a feeble image in the poor realities which surround us here below; grace, also invisible and spiritual in its nature; virtue, *virtus*, that which makes the man or the *vir*, a thing likewise invisible and spiritual (although it manifests itself by external acts) because it has its principle and its motive-spring in the hidden depths of conscience. Truth, grace, virtue; these are the triple object of the power of the Church.

As regards the extent of this power, that depends on its action; for the action which a power exercises upon its surroundings is the measure of its extent. And that action itself, in its form and extent, is determined by the means which the power is obliged to employ in order to attain its object. Now, the Church, charged to propagate truth, grace, and virtue, can accomplish that mission only by making use of five means. Truth needs the free preaching of the Divine word; grace is communicated to us by the free oblation of the Eucharist and the free administration of the Sacraments; virtue is developed by the free practice of its acts; and, in fine, nothing of all this can be accomplished without a priesthood which never ceases to proclaim truth, to call down grace, to kindle virtue, and consequently, without the free perpetuity of the sacerdotal hierarchy. The power of the Church, considered with regard to its extent or its action (for they are the same thing), consists, then, in the free preaching of the Gospel, in the free oblation of the Eucharist and the free administration of the Sacraments, in the free practice of virtue, and in the free perpetuity of her hierarchy.

The Church thus reaches two orders, the one internal, the other external. In the first, the interior order, she is in contact with something that is higher than man; she draws her strength from grace. In the second, the exterior order,

she is in contact with what is human ; she derives her strength from liberty. And thus, when we are asked by what right the Church has taken away a part of the power of the Cæsars, it is as if we were asked by what right Christian liberty is established. For the Church did not rob the Cæsars of the internal and Divine power of grace, they did not possess it ; her only quarrel with them has been over the external power, which is that of liberty. Consequently, between Cæsar and the Church, the question is reduced to this : By what right has Christian liberty been established ?

I answer first of all, by Divine right. It is not, in fact, by any concession of princes that it was given to us to teach the world. It was not the Cæsars, it was Jesus Christ Who has said to us : *Go teach all nations* (Matt. xxviii. 19). It was not the Cæsars, it was Jesus Christ Who has said to us : *Remit sins ; whatsoever you shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in Heaven* (Matt. xvi. 19). It was not the Cæsars, it was Jesus Christ Who has said to us : *Crucify your flesh with its affections and lusts* (Gal. v. 24). It was not the Cæsars, it was Jesus Christ Who has said to us : *Receive the Holy Ghost* (John xx. 22). Consequently, we do not hold our liberty from the Cæsars ; we hold it from God, and we will keep it because it comes from Him. Princes can unite to fight against the prerogatives of the Church, to heap opprobrious names on them in order to make them appear odious, to say that

they are an exorbitant power that is subversive of States : we shall let them do so, and we shall continue to preach truth, to remit sin, to combat vice, to communicate the Spirit of God. If they send us into exile, we will do so in exile ; if they cast us into prison, we will do so in prison ; if they drag us down into mines and enchain us, that will not stop us ; if they drive us from out of one kingdom, we shall only pass into another. We have been told that not until that Great Day when each one will have to give an account of his deeds shall we have exhausted the kingdoms of the earth. But if we are pursued on all sides, if the power of Antichrist should spread itself over the whole face of the world, then, as in the first ages of the Church, we shall seek shelter among tombs and in catacombs. And if at last they pursue us even there, if they make us mount the scaffold, then in every noble manly heart we shall find a last asylum, because we shall not have despaired of the truth, of the justice and of the liberty of mankind.

I say the liberty of mankind ; for to whom has Christian liberty been given ? To whom has Jesus Christ transmitted it in patrimony with His Blood ? To all ; and particularly to the poor, to the lowly, to the wretched. We hear every day eager talk of new theories of civilization, of agrarian laws, of the rights of the people. Some of you have in abundance scientific knowledge, credit, pomp, this world's joys ;

God either could not or would not give these to all: it matters little; but He has given His word to all. Would you deprive those that have nothing, of the right of hearing it? Would you deprive them of these declarations: *Blessed are the poor. Blessed are they that weep* (Matt. v. 3–5)? Beware lest in depriving others of them you also deprive yourselves of them! Sooner or later the world will fail you, and then you will be glad to find the liberty of the Cross. The Cross is the sceptre of the poor; but it is also the last that is clasped by the hands of kings. Respect it for others, out of pity for yourselves.

I repeat, then, that Christian liberty, which constitutes the power of the Church in her external relations, comes from God, and that it is the patrimony of mankind. I add that it belongs to the human race by natural right; because it is but the means of propagating truth, grace, and virtue, three things of which man cannot be deprived, which are essentially free in face of any human power.*

* *Cf.* Rev. Percy Dearmer, *Patriotism* (Oxford, 1915): "Patriotism too may become non-moral, or definitely immoral and atheistic. . . . We blame the enemy now because some Prussian writers have taught that the interests of the Fatherland over-ride every other consideration; we have also, long ago, it is to be hoped, blamed our allies in France for having taught that no other societies, such as the Church, have any rights against the State; but we shall be wise to examine ourselves whether we also have not given way to both these doctrines which set the State above liberty, above right, above God. A Christian cannot turn to the State for his ethics, or take diplomats as his spiritual directors; the only patriotism which he can respect is that which bows before the God of truth and righteousness. Now this Christian patriotism, because it is moral, is capable of being international."

To begin with truth. It is, in fact, a thing which belongs to no one in particular, which no sovereign can claim as his own exclusive property; truth is for all, and there is no right against it, since it is the source of all rights. What right could any man have against truth? That of preventing it from being known? But this would imply the negation of all justice; for truth is the right of all men, from the very fact that man is an intelligent being. No doubt, truth is expressed and transmitted by language; but language when it only expresses truth mingles and confounds itself with truth; it is only truth communicated—that is to say, truth exercising its right to make itself known. Would you say that truth has a right to be known, that there are no rights against it, but that princes have the right to discern what is truth and what is error? Well, even supposing that this right did appertain to the civil power, it would avail nothing against the Church, who is truth itself and the depositary of truth; but there is much wanting before it can be said absolutely that the right of distinguishing between truth and error belongs to the civil power. The civil power is composed of a certain number of men who are not infallible, and who can only assert that such a thing appears to them to be true or false, that such a thing seems to them to be likely to be beneficial or prejudicial to the State, without their possessing any right to give an obligatory

judgment on truth or error. No one can be bound in conscience to believe what the civil power believes, and, consequently, the right to discern truth and error does not belong to it; for if this right appertained to it, each citizen would be bound in conscience to adhere to its declared decisions. Who would not laugh at the idea of a human power coming to placard on the doors of Notre Dame what is truth to-day, and, this evening, what is to be truth to-morrow? It is true, princes have attempted this more than once; but if others were weak enough to submit to that abject servitude, the Church has always resisted it at the price of her blood, and has opposed to an ambition as ridiculous as it was disastrous on the part of kings the double safeguard of a profound contempt and a profound respect.*

Grace, like truth, is free of itself. For what is grace? It is an action of God upon man: how, then, could man have a right to hinder this action? It is true that grace is conferred by

* *Cf.* Bishop H. E. Ryle: "The cry for a creedless religion, and for Christianity without doctrine, may be popular with the ignorant. But teaching, when it becomes systematic, is doctrine; and the epitome of the objects of our belief is creed. Religion without doctrine is superficial sentiment, fed on phrases and ending in atheism." And Rev. Dinsdale Young: "Churches which cease to be theological soon deteriorate into mere ethical establishments, or purveyors of entertainment, or party political caucuses." Also Rev. R. J. Campbell: "If I had my time to come over again, I would never vote for the relegation of religious instruction to a subordinate place in our day-schools. We want not less of it, but more." And the *British Weekly* (Oct. 12, 1911): "Four children at least out of every five educated in our Sunday-schools are lost to the Church, and pass away unheeded into the world."

sensible or perceptible signs ; but these signs are, like language in regard to truth, only the expression of grace—grace communicating itself through a certain channel. Consequently, the sacraments and grace are indivisible ; you cannot attack the one without attacking the other. We will not do the civil authorities the injustice of believing that when, not very long ago, they sent their officers into our churches to seize by civil decree the Sacred Hosts, the Body of the Living God, their anger was raised against nothing but a little bread. They did not attack these visible things, but the force which lay hidden in them. And what is that force, if not that which is imparted to us by faith and which results from the action of God upon us ? If it were not God which I bear to the altar, if it were only bread, you would not need so many armed officials to snatch it from my hands.

There remains virtue. And here it is that the light is most intense, most dazzling ; for what rights can men have against virtue ? Man is born into this world to be good and to do good ; it is more than his right, it is his duty to be good. Are there any rights against duty ? I wish to be humble, meek, chaste : who has any right to prevent or hinder me from practising humility, meekness, and chastity ? I determine to lay aside the garments of the rich, and to put on, out of love, those of the poor : who has any right to stop me ? I am bent on selling my patrimony

and distributing it among the suffering members of Jesus Christ and humanity: who has any right to set up a defence against a heart which opens itself to the afflicted, and to proscribe charity?* Ah! if, when we first came to announce the Gospel, men had been able to say that we were incendiaries, that we disturbed the Empire and wished to overthrow it, the civil power would have been justified in guarding

* *Cf.* Lacordaire, *Memorial for the Re-establishment of the Friars Preachers in France* (Paris, 1839): "We live in times when a man wishing to become poor and the servant of all, finds it more difficult to carry out his desire than to create for himself wealth and fame. Kings, politicians, and journalists, partisans alike of absolutism and of liberty, are leagued against voluntary self-sacrifice; never before was Europe so afraid of a man going about barefoot and shabbily clad in a coarse woollen habit. We, the children of the 19th century, have demanded liberty to believe in nothing, and it is granted; we have claimed liberty to seek all office and honour in the State, and it is not denied us; we have called for liberty to deal in our extreme youth with the weightier questions that influence the destinies of the nation, and it is allowed us; we have sought liberty to lead a life of ease and luxury, and we are welcome to it. But when now, prompted by Divine grace, we ask for liberty to follow the inspirations of our Faith, to seek no wealth, to live in poverty with a few like-minded companions; then, forsooth, we are pulled up, innumerable laws are hurled at us, and Europe itself is ready to fall upon us and crush us."

Also Lamennais, *Essai sur l'indifférence*, Eng. trans. (London, 1895), chap. xi: "To sacrifice everything to self is a natural inclination of man, because man naturally prefers himself to everything. The principle of private interest and the principle of duties are therefore essentially conflicting, and the being who should have no other rule of duty than his interest, would be essentially unsociable; for the giving up of oneself, among the members of any society, is the first condition of the existence or that society. Thus religion or society between God and man, is founded on the mutual gift or the sacrifice of God to man and of man to God, and human society is equally founded upon the mutual gift or sacrifice of man to man, or of each man to all men; and sacrifice is the essence of all real society. The Evangelical doctrine of renunciation of self, so strange to the human understanding, is but the expression of this truth, or the promulgation of this great social law. That is why among all Christian nations the idea of *devotion* and of *consecration* is joined to all public functions: a sublime idea which religion has made so familiar to us, that it hardly excites our attention."

itself against us. But "go into your prisons," said Tertullian, "and see if you can find there one single Christian accused of crime. Those whom you retain there are accused of but one thing—of bearing the name of Christians. And what do you ask of them as the price of their liberty? To take a little incense between their fingers and to sprinkle it before a statue. It is not, then," he concluded, "on account of their vices that you accuse them, but on account of their virtues." Let us be candid, Gentlemen: here below we can and do dispute about truth, but never about virtue. Virtue shines with such a dazzling lustre as to leave no hold that injustice or tyranny can grasp; and, although Christianity may not be free in the sphere of truth, it must be free in that of virtue.

You see, not only is the power of the Church founded on Divine right, not only is it legitimate by virtue of natural right, but it is, in the last analysis, nothing else than the actual exercise of human liberty. Whoso attacks the Church, attacks our liberty, I do not say our political and civil liberty, but our moral liberty, that which makes us men. As an intelligent being, man has a right to know and to communicate truth; as a moral being, he has the right to practise virtue and to teach it to others; as a religious being, he has the right to communicate with God, and to receive His inspirations and His gifts. Liberty of truth, liberty of virtue,

liberty of grace: this is the whole power of the Church, her whole right, her whole ambition.*

Thus, the establishment of the Church has been an event marvellously beneficial to the moral liberty and the dignity of man. Formerly the civil power regulated not only the interests of life, of security, of property, of honour, and of national independence, but also moral and religious affairs; and that accumulation of powers, without being useful to religion and morality which had fallen into frightful degradation, rendered despotism more deeply seated and more indestructible. By the establishment of the Church the civil power has lost the government of human thought and opinions, and is no longer master of the Divine laws. Religion subsists of itself, of its own independent life and vigour, counterbalancing by its influence all the exorbitant influences which would tend to prevail over and oppress the nations. The Church's influence has been productive of so much good to society, it has so much improved and refined the manners and morals of the people, that men have even attributed to error the rights of truth, and that all sects have aspired to the same liberty as that which has been conquered by the Catholic Church. We no longer hear of the

* *Cf.* Bossuet, *Polit. tirée de l'Ecrit.*: "If it be asked what should be said of a State in which public authority should be established without any religion, it is plain at once that there is no need to answer chimerical questions. There never were such States. Peoples, where there is no religion, are at the same time without policy, without real subordination, and entirely savage."

civil power exercising in its own name religious power; and it is not the least dishonour of Protestantism that it has made the prince the exterior head of Christianity in the various Protestant nations.

But, you may say, if the establishment of a spiritual power in the world has favoured and developed the dignity and moral liberty of man, has it not introduced a principle of dangerous anarchy into civil society? Instead of that unity of power which maintained social order there will henceforth be in each Catholic State two powers having the same subjects. If, indeed, the spiritual power and the civil had never yet disagreed about their rights and privileges, perhaps that state of things would be tolerable. But we all know that although there are some things evidently spiritual, and others evidently temporal, there are many of a mixed and indeterminate nature which are a subject of constant and interminable dispute between the two powers. History is full of examples of such disputes. Sometimes the Church, sometimes the Empire, has carried the day: sanguinary quarrels have stained the annals of the Church and those of the nations. What method is there for peaceably settling those disputes when they arise? Who is to judge between the two parties, since they are each independent of the other and have no common superior? War, in such cases, decides between temporal

sovereigns. Shall it also be war which shall decide between the spiritual power and the civil? If it be war, the Church is not then founded upon the sole strength of Divine grace and persuasion, and Catholic States will be menaced with perpetual civil war. If it is not war, who is to be the arbiter in these conflicts?

Gentlemen, let us first of all remark that the present state of humanity is one of struggle; that men find their level through struggle; that good and evil, flesh and spirit, kingdoms against kingdoms, ideas against ideas, are in a state of permanent conflict, and that order springs from this combat. Order is nothing more than the assemblage and blending of many and divers elements; and the more harmony is composed of partial discords, the greater is the triumph of order and the more is its power manifested. Do not, then, wonder that God has established, by the institution of His Church, a sort of dualism in society. No power is limited except by another power; and what is so admirable is that the spiritual power, in restricting the civil power, actually strengthens it on an immovable basis. Never have princes lived longer, or enjoyed more the love of the nations they governed, than since the establishment of the Church; and the more the Church strengthens herself in a State the more is the civil power respected by the citizens, and the more the Church loses her influence the more is the citizens' reverence for

civil authority diminished. That is an undoubted fact, which admits of no reply. God, in establishing His Church, has not only provided for human liberty, but also for the protection of human authority. We may say of His Church what Tacitus said of Nerva, that "she has reconciled liberty and authority." If you seek to know why, you will find that the distinctive function of the Church is to cause all rights to be respected, by making truth known and respected, and that, consequently, all rights, those of the sovereign and those of the people, have in her a supporter and defender.

As to the questions that arise between the two powers on difficult and delicate matters, let us first observe that the fundamental rights of the Church are as clear as day; that, with regard to mixed questions, the two powers have the means of agreeing by concordats and by making reciprocal concessions; that the Church, having no armed force at her disposal, can never establish an injustice by violence. This is the great privilege of the Church in this world: she can do no injustice by force of arms. If she acts, it is always with the consent of nations or sovereigns, under the protection of liberty or public law. I admit that it lies in the power of the State to misuse its force against the Church; but the Church would use against it but two means of defence, namely, martyrdom and God: martyrdom, in choosing rather to suffer death

than to do anything against the rights accorded to her by God ; and, next, God Himself, Who is her founder, her guide, the guardian of her weakness in the midst of the world, and Who has promised never to abandon her. There are many examples of this in history, and I could mention recent ones with which you are acquainted. What could Pius VII do against Napoleon ? Yet the simple conscientious resistance of the Pope prevailed against the master of the world ; the unarmed Pontiff vanquished the man of armies.

When you ask who is to be the judge between the pontifical and the civil power, you forget that there is a God Who governs the whole world, and you ask for a solution which, if it were visibly possible without Divine intervention, would drive God from the general government of human affairs. God is necessary ; He orders and controls all human activities and happenings, and He manifests His action by events which change the face of ages, and which have a peculiar character of unforeseen power by which it is easy to recognize them.*

* *Cf.* F. Brunetière, *Manuel de l'Hist. de la Litt. Franç.*, Eng. trans. (London, 1898) : " De Maistre and Bossuet concerned themselves more especially with the idea of Providence. All de Maistre's works hinge upon his desire to prove that the world is governed by God. Guided by the idea of Providence, no one has been more alive than he to the ' apocalyptic ' character of the French Revolution. He considers the Papacy as the instrument of Providence on earth, and tries to show the injury France has done herself every time she has become estranged from the Papacy." And Bishop F. P. Kenrick, *The Primacy* (New York, 1848) : " It is well observed by de Maistre that whatever may be said in the abstract of the

There is no cause, then, for mistrust or hatred of the Catholic Church, in consequence of her definite establishment in the very midst of society, of space, and of time. She has received all, usurped nothing, blessed everything: she has received her rights from God and from nature; she has neither usurped truth, which is for all, nor grace, which belongs only to God, nor virtue, which is the common duty; she has blessed liberty by the use she has made of it, and authority by permitting it to share her own crown. Yet she has unceasingly suffered persecution, notwithstanding the splendour of her legitimate claims and of her good deeds. How can this be? What wind is this which, sweeping down through the ages, wafts on its wings these strange sounds of menace and outrage? I will tell you, Gentlemen. Two spirits pursue the Church and will pursue her always: the spirit of domination and the spirit of licence. The spirit of domination could not endure the liberty which the Church enjoys, and the spirit of licence abhors the truth, the grace, and the virtue of which the Church is the indefatigable apostle and heroic supporter. The spirit of domination drives nations into ancient or modern Protestantism, in order to become the sole master of the

plenitude of pontifical power, any attempt to exercise it wantonly would provoke general and successful resistance. 'What,' he asks, 'can restrain the Pope? Everything—canons, laws, national usages, sovereigns, tribunals, national assemblies, prescription, representations, negotiations, duty, fear, prudence, and especially public opinion, the queen of the world.'"

community; the spirit of licence pushes them into a still wider revolt, in order to emancipate pride and lust wonuded by the mystery of the Cross. It would seem as if the Church must succumb beneath this double effort which tends towards the one end and which leagues against her the throne and the people. But, O depths of the ways of God! the spirit of domination hates the spirit of licence, and the spirit of licence loathes the spirit of domination. When both of them rushed with increased eagerness and impetuosity upon the Church, and already rejoiced at her approaching ruin, they suddenly met face to face, and rushed against each other. A blind fury precipitates them one upon the other; they want each to gather alone the spoils of the Church, and their reciprocal hatred is increased by the presence of their prey. From time to time they pause and regard each other with astonishment, they feel that they want to be united to destroy their victim; they seek for some ties of kindred which should serve as a bond between them. The spirit of domination says to itself: Am I not the father of licence? And the spirit of licence says to itself: Am I not the father of domination? Vain efforts! They hate the Church well enough to league themselves together against her, but they hate each other too well to suffer any other hatred to serve as a bond between them. O justice of God! Oh the irony of Divine justice!

In an oasis of Arabia a lamb was feeding. The roaring of a lion is heard, the king of the desert appears, he is about to spring upon the defenceless animal! But lo! another lion, moved by the same hunger for food, leaps from the other side of the desert. They look at each other, they fall upon each other, tearing each other to pieces, while the lamb, safe and sound, feeds quietly beside their rage. The two lions are the world; the lamb is the Church: the world is divided, the Church is one.

XI

Catholicism and Liberty

No power can be conceived without sovereignty or supremacy—without, that is, being independent of the persons it governs. Power which would depend on those subject to it, would not be power; it would be subjection. Now, the spiritual power necessarily possesses a spiritual sovereignty, which was given to it in those celebrated words: *Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven* (Matt. xviii. 18). This power of binding and loosing in the spiritual order is nothing else than the right of possessing independent control over everything that has been Divinely entrusted to the Church. The Church was not sent to men as a slave, but as a mistress; she was not sent to dispense the word of God and His grace and carry out her ministry as man wished, but to dispense them and minister with wisdom and justice, to admit those she considers worthy to a share in her Divine benefits, to reject those she considers unworthy; otherwise she would act

blindly and would destroy souls instead of saving them.* I propose then, Gentlemen, to examine to-day the coercive power of the Church, or her power of binding and loosing, which is but

* *Cf.* Dora Greenwell, *op. cit.* : " De Maistre writes, ' infallibility is a mere question of words ; it is in the spiritual order what in the temporal order is called sovereignty—the right common to all possible sovereignties of not being accusable, or considered subject to error. There must always be a last resource, *a judge who is not to be judged*, who is able to make obedience instantaneous and obligatory.' Much of Lacordaire's teaching is but an expansion of this argument." And John (Viscount) Morley, *Biographical Studies* (London : Macmillan & Co.) : " De Maistre, in his book *Du Pape*, practically says, ' infallibility is only a consequence of supremacy, or rather it is absolutely the same thing under a different name. In effect it is the same thing, *in practice*, not to be subject to error, and not to be liable to be accused of it. Thus, even if we should agree that no divine promise was made to the Pope, he would not be less infallible or deemed so, as the final tribunal ; for every judgment from which you cannot appeal is and must be held for just in every human association, under any imaginable form of government ; and every true statesman will understand me perfectly, when I say that the point is to ascertain not only if the Sovereign Pontiff is, but if he must be, infallible.' In another place he says distinctly enough that the infallibility of the Church has two aspects ; in one of them it is the object of divine promise, in the other it is a human implication, and that in the latter aspect infallibility is supposed in the Church, just ' as we are absolutely bound to suppose it, even in temporal sovereignties (where it does not really exist), under pain of seeing society dissolved.' The Church only demands what other sovereignties demand, though she has the immense superiority over them of having her claim backed by direct promise from heaven. The Pope, from this point of view, asks for no other infallibility than that which is attributed to all sovereigns. Without either vindicating or surrendering the supernatural side of the Papal claim, de Maistre only insists upon the political, social, or human side of it, as an inseparable quality of an admitted supremacy." Also *The Times Literary Supplement* (March 10, 1921) : " The Vatican assembly of 1870 itself, though gathered on the neutral soil of Peter's Patrimony, met under the protection of French bayonets, and such a condition could be, and was, used in an attempt to influence its deliberations. This progressive impracticability of the conciliar system was an argument for ratifying by a solemn act the concentration of sovereignty in the hands of the Pope which carried great weight in the mind of an ecclesiastical statesman like Manning. . . . The promulgation of Papal infallibility and the disappearance from the map of the State of the Church were almost simultaneous events. With the first secured, the second appeared to Manning a blow less grave than it would have been a few years before."

the power to inflict punishment on the conscience and, in the external order, to excommunicate.

It is in the nature of things that all evil begets unhappiness in the person that commits it, otherwise there would be no distinction between good and evil. This unhappiness is the penalty. But as the object of punishment is not a sterile vengeance, as the function of punishments is medicinal and deterrent as well as retributive, it follows that every penalty, in the present order of things, is a mixture of justice and mercy. Where there is only justice, the guilty person is sacrificed ; where there is only mercy, good is compromised. Now, we recognize on earth three penal powers—nature, civil society, and the Church. Nature punishes evil in the body and in the soul : in the body, by disease, suffering, and premature death ; in the soul, by degrading it, and taking away from it all its purity, its sensitiveness, and its holiness. There, there is no mercy ; nature causes its avenging sting to be felt to the uttermost. When it has branded a man it rarely permits him ever to rise again. If I consider civil society, even there I find mercy absent. Nature disgraces, society dishonours ; for, wherever the punishment is public, dishonour is inevitable, and wherever dishonour punishes, mercy does not appear. Neither nature, then, nor society, possesses a perfect penalty—a penalty, that is, which wounds and heals, which chastises and reconciles, which strikes whilst

loving, and humbles but to raise up again. Nature wields the remorseless sword of sorrow and death, society has its axe and its executioners; neither the one nor the other knows the vase in which the unction of mercy and the honour of repentance lie hidden. This mysterious aroma was confided to the Church; she alone possesses the secret of penalties which reinstate the offender, and this is not the least among the evidences of her Divine institution.

The most important of the Divine penalties with which the Church is armed is confession, voluntary confession. And in this penalty there is justice; for if you have had the courage to commit the fault, why not do so before the world? If you have not been afraid of doing evil before your own heart, why not do it before the whole human family? And yet this justice is merciful; for it is not to the world, to a severe and corrupt world, that you are directed to confess your faults, but to a single man, under the most absolute secrecy; to a man humble and meek, subject to temptation like his brethren, but purified by victory; and this confession humbles without dishonouring you, touches rather than strikes you, reconciles you to yourself and to God: to yourself, by the good that you feel stirring within your heart, to God, by the pardon which He grants to you. When Protestantism has abolished confession, when it has sent away the priest, and sent men to

confess to God, what has it done but left the soul alone with its guilt, and driven away mercy by the fear of justice ?* And when, Gentlemen, by a better instinct, you busy yourselves about penitentiary systems, are you not following in the tracks of Jesus Christ and His Church ? Are you not endeavouring to transform public vengeance into expiation, so that the culprit may leave your hands punished but saved, wounded by shame and sorrow but brought back by them to know and honour virtue ? This is your object, and one of your most cherished desires ; it is also one most worthy of respect : why, then, do you despise the mystery of expiation in the Church ? Why do you not perceive that the work accomplished by her is the very one which it is your ambition to realize ? For you are as yet only making experiments ; and what experiments they are ! You may construct elaborate prisons, you may stifle a man between four walls, you may inflict on him many privations on the plea that you are not torturing him

* To a Protestant friend who said that it is against common sense to believe that a priest can forgive sins, for none but God can remit sin, a Catholic replied : " You believe in the necessity and efficacy of baptism for the remission of original sin, and you believe that a layman can validly baptize ; therefore you believe that you yourself can remit original sin by administering the sacrament of baptism. Is it not equally consonant with common sense to believe that a priest can remit actual sin by administering the sacrament of penance ? "

Cf. Bishop J. C. Hedley, O.S.B., *Our Divine Saviour*, p. 223 : " When the priest baptizes, it is Christ who baptizes. When the bishop confirms, it is Christ who confirms. When the penitent in the confessional listens to the words of absolution, it is Christ who absolves." See also Abbé H. Perreyve, *From Dawn to Dusk*, Eng. trans. by J. C. Chambers (London, 1922), chap. iv.

because you are not shedding his blood; but whatever you may do, you will always degrade the man, and if you do find the road to his heart, it will be only to pour into it more deeply the poison of despair. Yes, repentance is needed more than punishment; expiation rather than repression; reinstatement instead of death: but this you cannot effect. Do not forget that it is effected; allow men to come to the feet of the priest, and you will do more than all your chains, your executioners, and your dreams can ever do. Besides, what crimes do you prevent by all this array of punishments? Murder, theft, violence. There yet exists an evil which penetrates to the hearts of men, which gnaws at the very vitals of family life, which corrupts nations and delivers them bound hand and foot to the first victorious assailant. Does not this evil elude you? We, with our voluntary confession, reach all crimes, public as well as secret ones; we reach them in the very thought that paves the way to them, we reach them on the throne as well as in the artisan's workshop. Look at those princes, men as we are, more human, in fact, than we are, and for that very reason the more to be pitied: they have their vices encircled with guards and honours; the truth never reaches them even when men insult them; for insult teaches no truth.* But stay:

* *Cf.* La Bruyère, *Les Caractères*: "Two sorts of men flourish in Courts and reign there by turns, freethinkers and hypocrites." And Massillon, *Petit Carême*: "What plagues for a prince are those

here is a poor priest, a Capuchin, his name unknown; he ascends the gorgeous staircase, passes within, and penetrates even where confidential friends are not admitted; he sits down, and the prince kneels before him and says: *Confiteor tibi, Pater.* And to whom does he say it? It is not to a man, but to the whole of humanity. It is the whole human race which grasps and constrains him, and says to him: "Sire, you have sinned, you are not worthy to draw near to God."

If someone had said to Augustus, whilst he was walking in his gardens with Horace or Mæcenas: "There is a man down below there with a wallet and a staff, who says he is sent from God to hear the confession of your faults," would not the Emperor have looked upon this man as a fool? And yet, Gentlemen, that folly has prevailed! And note, I request you, that Christianity at every moment is full of these follies; and we justify them in your presence, before you, the élite of this age; and you listen to us, and say: "Nevertheless, it is grand!"

I shall not stop to examine the other penalties which the Church imposes in the sphere of her

men who are born to applaud his passions and to lay snares for his innocence! What misery for the people when princes and nobles give themselves up to those enemies of their glory, who are the enemies of wisdom and truth! The plague of adulation and flattery is a calamity for the State. May the Lord (as a pious king said formerly) confound those deceitful tongues and lying lips, which seek our destruction in studying only what pleases us." Also F. Brunetière, *Hist. de la Litt. Franç.*: "Voltaire wearied Louis XV by his excessive flatteries, Mme de Pompadour by his familiarity, and the courtiers by his self-sufficiency."

internal jurisdiction, such as prayer, alms-giving, and mortification. We should have the same remarks to make about them as about voluntary confession. They are all a mixture of justice and mercy, and have for their object the destruction of the roots of pride and concupiscence within us. I pass then to the penalties of her external jurisdiction, which reduce themselves to excommunication, that is to say, to the withdrawal, more or less complete, of the spiritual blessings of which the Church disposes, to the partial or total separation from her communion. This penalty is also of Divine origin, that is, it was established by Jesus Christ, Who said to His disciples: *If thy brother offend thee, go and reprove him between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee thou shalt gain thy brother; but if he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may stand; and if he will not hear them, tell the Church. And if he will not hear the Church let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican* (Matt. xviii. 15–17). This penalty is at once just and merciful: just, because every community rests upon reciprocal obligations, and participation in its rights demands participation in its duties; merciful, because there is no violence, and by merely accepting the dispositions of the sinner it is able to bring back the soul that has wandered away of its own free will, scarcely aware of the abyss into which it was about to fall. Still, as there is

question here of the external jurisdiction of the Church, of her public relations with one of her rebellious members, severity must predominate rather than gentleness, and excommunication must be considered no longer as only a salutary medicinal punishment but also as the exercise of an exalted liberty. We have seen that the Church was free in her spiritual activities; she was free to spread the truth by preaching, grace by the Sacrifice of the Mass and the Sacraments, virtue by all those practices of piety which promote and strengthen it: in this consists her positive liberty, her liberty of acting. But there is another liberty no less necessary and precious; and this is negative liberty, the liberty of not acting, without which no sovereignty or even dignity is possible. This liberty the Church possesses by virtue of her power of excommunication.

Without this power of excommunicating, what should we be? Slaves. Whoever has not the liberty of refusing his service is a slave; whoever has the liberty of refusing it is a master and lord. The powers that be must be made to understand that the least among priests has the power to refuse to communicate with them. A Theodosius must be made to understand that he will meet an Ambrose, who, seeing him coming with blood-stained hands from Thessalonica, will await him on the threshold of the cathedral and say to him: "You have soldiers, you have

power to force the doors of the cathedral; but if you enter, I shall go out." The liberty of refusing to act is the very first liberty of a courageous man. Woe to him who does not possess it!

At the time of the discussions between St Thomas of Canterbury and Henry II of England, the Archbishop signed, in the Prince's palace, some articles* contrary to the liberties of the Church; after having done this, he retired, preceded by a deacon bearing the cross. When they reached the ante-chamber of the palace, the deacon placed the cross against the wall, and made way for the Bishop; and when the Bishop asked the reason of this, the deacon replied: "I no longer carry the cross before you, because you have betrayed the Church of God." Thomas Becket wept, and as soon as he had reached his house, he retracted what he had signed. Well, Gentlemen, wherein lies the beauty of this reply, "I no longer carry the cross before you"? What caused Thomas Becket, great though he was, to weep? What entitles the deacon to admiration, although his conduct, according to ordinary rules, was reprehensible? It is that he spoke as a free man, as an honourable man, and as a Christian; he spoke as a man who refused the wages of iniquity; and he became, by that simple act of abstention, stronger and greater than his master. When he spoke, it was

* The Constitutions of Clarendon.

as if to say: "You are the Archbishop of Canterbury, you have been Chancellor of England, the friend of the king; I am but a poor deacon: but you have just betrayed the Church; I am too great to bear the cross before you." That was a sublime excommunication.

The more a nation withdraws itself from the faith, the more necessary it is for us to retain that Christian pride which caused the Mussulmen to say, in speaking of St Louis: "We have never seen so proud a Christian." The more the Church is outraged, the more necessary it is for her, like a man of honour, to cleave firmly to her liberty. It is said that at Rome, when a man takes away his life by suicide, he is looked upon as a madman, and is not refused the rites of Christian burial. This is possible at Rome, where Christianity reigns in all its splendour; here we cannot act so. It is necessary to be tolerant, but not tolerant to the point of ignominy. And mark well, my friends, that the liberty of not acting is yet stronger than the liberty of acting. A man speaks, men can cut out his tongue; he lifts his hands towards heaven, they can cut them down; he goes to administer the Sacraments, they can obstruct his path. But on the other hand, what can they do to force him to act if he will not act and ought not to act; what can they do to draw from him the words of absolution or of consecration? They will kill him, perhaps. But then he

triumphs ; for when a man is dead he can act no longer. Death destroys the liberty of acting, it consecrates that of not acting.*

It is not necessary for us to dwell any longer on the coercive power of the Church, considered in its purely spiritual and internal nature, because nothing is more easy to understand than that there is no society without laws, and that he who will not obey the laws of a society ought only to blame himself if society casts him out or imposes upon him conditions before receiving him back to favour. But a graver question here presents itself, which has doubtless occupied your thoughts whilst I have been speaking to you. You have said to yourselves : " The power to bind and loose, kept within purely spiritual limits, without the support of any civil power, is perfectly natural and speaks for itself. But has not the Church made use of physical force to compel obedience to her laws ? Has she not called in the civil power to the help of the spiritual power ? Herein lies the difficulty. How can the Church be founded on grace and persuasion, if bloody scaffolds are raised to defend her ? " I am glad, my friends, to be challenged on this point. I will deal with it quite frankly, without forcing history to yield before the Gospel or the Gospel before history.

* *Cf.* Fénelon, *Mémoires* (Chaulnes, 1711) : " The Church can excommunicate the prince, and the prince can put the pastor to death. Both should avail themselves of this right only in the last extremity : still, however, it is a right."

It is certain that the Church possesses no right to the use of the material sword. One day Jesus Christ turned to His disciples when they wished to cause fire to descend from heaven upon a city that had rejected them, and said to them reproachfully: *You know not of what spirit you are; the Son of man came not to destroy souls but to save* (Luke ix. 55–56). This spirit has been perpetuated in the Church, not only whilst she was being persecuted, but also at the time of her triumph. I will not quote to you the words of Tertullian, Origen, St Cyprian, Lactantius, St Athanasius, St Hilary of Poitiers, or St John Chrysostom; one striking fact will say more. At the end of the fourth century, when two Spanish Bishops denounced the Priscillianites to the magistrates, and caused many of them to be condemned to death, Pope Siricius, who then governed the Universal Church, opposed those two Bishops; St Ambrose cut them off from his communion; St Martin repented all his life for having, on one single occasion, communicated with them; finally, they were condemned in 390 at a Council of Milan, and in 401 at a Council of Turin. Two centuries later, St Gregory the Great wrote as follows to a Patriarch of Constantinople about certain heretics who had been maltreated during a tumult: "It is a new and unheard-of form of preaching, that of forcing belief by executions!" A Council of Toledo, held in 633, ordered that no person should be

forced into a profession of faith, for the faith should be embraced voluntarily and through persuasion: and this canon has been incorporated in the Code of Canon Law.

It is, then, certain that the Church, as a Church, does not possess the right to the use of the material sword, that she is founded on persuasion, that faith should not be forced by violence. Nevertheless, cannot the civil authority, which holds the power of the sword, make vigorous use of it, not to obtain faith, which is a fruit of grace and persuasion, but to defend the Church against the attacks of her enemies, and to prevent all external demonstrations against the faith? This, Gentlemen, is a new point of view from which we must consider the question.

For all ancient communities religion was considered to be a fundamental law of the State, and whoever insulted religion was punished as a violator of the most sacred laws of the country. Now, had the civil community the right to make religion a fundamental law of the State? There is no reason to doubt it, for civil society is free to set up any laws that are not unjust, and it does not appear to be unjust to prevent the commission of any external act against the religion unanimously practised in a country. The greatest legislators of antiquity have been of this opinion, and Rousseau, in the last chapter of his *Contrat Social*, has formally proved that the

civil community possessed this right. When Christianity was spreading throughout the world after the Ascension of Christ, it found there this doctrine, which was partly the cause of the long persecution that the Church had to suffer. The Church, protected by God, surmounted this obstacle. The bonds which united religion and the State were broken, and were renewed only later, in all their strength, after the dissolution of the Roman Empire and the conversion of the Teutonic tribes. At last, Christianity became by unanimous consent the religion of Europe, and the ancient unity, which made religion the fundamental law of the State, became re-established. Every external act against Christianity was regarded as a revolt against the laws. But notice, Gentlemen, this was a political arrangement, and not an institution of Divine origin. Society, which had established this law, judged it to be useful for the peace of the Empire ; but the Church could not establish it in virtue of her own right.* I am not now examining the

* *Cf.* Lacordaire, *Memorial for the Re-establishment of the Friars Preachers* : "The Inquisition is a tribunal established in some Christian countries by the co-operation of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities for the discovery and repression of acts tending to subvert religion. St Dominic is accused of having originated this tribunal. The Dominicans are accused of being its promoters and principal instruments. The Spanish Dominicans are more especially held accountable. Now, St Dominic was not the founder of the Inquisition, nor did he ever discharge Inquisitorial functions. The Dominicans have been neither the promoters nor principal agents of the Inquisition. And as regards the Spanish Inquisition, far from being responsible for its acts, the Dominicans were removed from it by the Kings of Spain, when towards the end of the 15th and the beginning of the 16th century those monarchs changed the tribunal in question into a new and political institution, requiring

merits of this political institution ; I only say that it was a political institution, and that, at the very least, it was based upon the example of every nation and legislator of antiquity. You have vestiges of it even among Protestant States. For instance, the observance of the Sunday forms part of the law of the land in England and in the United States, and this law is there carried out by unanimous consent, with a rigour which we should be tempted to criticize, but which is the result of the free wish of the citizens. Nobody is compelled to believe in the necessity of rest on the seventh day as the institution of God, but everyone is obliged to respect its external observance. Such was, then, in the Middle Ages the law of European States regarding religion ; that law has been destroyed by the will of those who made it ; religion is no longer the fundamental law of our country ; but still, the State had the right to choose that law, to impose it upon itself, and to cause it to be respected.

more pliant ministers than these religious. Such assertions may astonish men who take their notions of history from Protestants and rationalists ; but they will not surprise those who know that history, for three centuries, has been a perpetual and flagrant lie, which the learned in France, Germany, and England have already gone a great way in demolishing." And the *Church Times* (Aug. 5, 1921) : " History has abundantly recognised that the Inquisitors of a later time were not following the example of St Dominic himself. When at the beginning of the last century in Spain every possible count was included in the indictment of the Inquisition, one of them was that ' the early inquisitors encountered heresy with no other arms than those of prayer, patience and instruction, and this remark applies more particularly to St Dominic.' " See also Lord Acton, *History of Freedom and Other Essays*, pp. 427–8 ; and Hoffman Nickerson, *The Inquisition* (London : Bale and Danielsson, 1923).

"That is all very well," you will answer; "but the Church was very glad of it, the Church consented to it, the Church lent her co-operation; she accepted the benefits which this bloodshed conferred on her; she joined the spiritual sword to the temporal sword to form with them, over the heads of the people, a vault into which the air of liberty could not enter." Yes, I believe from the bottom of my heart that the Church was glad to be associated with the State, to create by their united action an empire in which the distinction of powers would lead but to greater harmony and more profound unity. I affirm that I believe this; but with the same candour I will tell you why.

Truth is accused of being intolerant, and men speak freely of toleration as an appanage of error. No prejudice is more widely spread, none is more contradicted by history and by existing facts. If there is a historical dogma, it is that error is persecuting, implacable, atrocious, at all times, and to as great and enduring an extent as possible. Error is Antiochus, truth is the Maccabees. *All those*, said St Paul, *who would live piously in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution* (2 Tim. iii. 13). And Jesus Christ, the great holocaust of truth, the supreme victim of error, said Himself to the Jews: *Behold I shall send to you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them you will put to death and crucify; and some you will scourge in your synagogues,*

and persecute them from city to city, that upon you may come all the just blood that hath been shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel the just even to the blood of Zacharias the son of Barachias, whom ye killed between the temple and the altar (Matt. xxiii. 34–35). This prophecy was soon fulfilled, not only in Judea, but in every part of the world. Who were the persecutors during the first three centuries of the Christian era? Was it the Catholics, or their enemies? Who were the persecutors under the Eastern Emperors? Was it not the Arians, the Donatists, the Iconoclasts? And you know with what fury and perseverance. Up to the time of Charlemagne, the Church had incessantly to defend herself against assassinations, tortures, conflagration, prison, and exile; and all this she suffered at the hands of error. You should read in St Augustine of the atrocities committed in Africa by the Donatists; how they organized bands of assassins and incendiaries, who mutilated, plucked out men's eyes and filled them with vinegar and quicklime; and yet St Augustine never ceased imploring the magistrates of Africa not to punish them with death, because their crimes were committed out of hatred of the Church. The sixteenth century witnessed, with the resurrection of error, the renewal of these bloody tragedies; it beheld Protestants break our images, destroy our churches, lay waste our tombs, throw the ashes

of our fathers to the winds and into the floods, slay our priests and our monks, and invent for us, in free England, punishments of which the description alone is a cruel punishment.* And to-day, when ideas of toleration seem to be so widely spread, who are the persecutors in Europe? Who imprisons, who banishes, who exiles to Siberia, who compels conversions by craft and violence? Is it the Church? Ah! the whole world knows! Look nearer home; in the smallest hamlets you will see the Church exposed

* *Cf.* Hallam, *Constit. Hist.*: "Persecution is the deadly original sin of the Reformed Churches, which cools every honest man's zeal for their cause, in proportion as his reading becomes extensive." Lecky, *Rationalism in Europe*: "Persecution among the early Protestants was a distinct and definite doctrine, digested into elaborate treatises and enforced against the most inoffensive as against the most formidable sects." Guizot, *Hist. of Civ. in Eur.*: "In Germany, far from demanding political liberty, the Reformation accepted, I will not say servitude, but the absence of liberty." And Dean W. F. Hook, *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii: "The notion of religious liberty, or even of toleration, never entered into the mind of any reformer of the 16th century."

Cf. also Lord Acton, *The History of Freedom and Other Essays* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1909), pp. 186–7: "The Church began with the principles of liberty, both as her claim and as her rule; and external circumstances forced intolerance upon her after her spirit of unity had triumphed, in spite both of the freedom she proclaimed and of the persecutions she suffered. Protestantism set up intolerance as an imperative precept and as a part of its doctrine, and it was forced to admit tolerance by the necessities of its position, after the rigorous penalties it imposed had failed to arrest the process of internal dissolution. . . . In the same age the Puritans and the Catholics sought a refuge beyond the Atlantic from the persecution which they suffered together under the Stuarts. They were enabled respectively to carry out their own views in the colonies which they founded in Massachusetts and Maryland, and the history of those two States exhibits faithfully the contrast between the two Churches. The Catholic emigrants established, for the first time in history, a government in which religion was free, and with it the germ of that religious liberty which now prevails in America. The Puritans, on the other hand, revived with greater severity the penal laws of the mother country." See too Bishop M. Creighton, *Persecution and Tolerance* (London, 1906), pp. 2–8.

to a harassing minority, who deprive her as much as possible of the means of existence, calumniate her, and inevitably lose sight of the sense of justice and injustice as soon as her rights are in question. The struggle between error and truth is always that of Cain and Abel. Cain constantly says to his brother, "Come, let us go down together into the field of liberty"; but it is only treacherously to murder him there.

This should not astonish us, Gentlemen; what is error to do? Error has neither reason, nor heart, nor history, nor order, nor logic on its side; at each step it meets with indestructible institutions, unshakable convictions, with transformations of the soul which charm away its disciples.* Again, I ask, what is error to do? It can only become exasperated and pass from insanity to homicide. The blood which was upon Cain is its sign: nowadays people try to disguise it, a time will come when its purple stain will no longer be hidden from men's eyes. It is true that we, tired of an oppression which we had endured for ten centuries, have accepted gratefully union with the civil power when it was proposed to us; we believed that unity was a benefit to mankind as well as to ourselves. The result of this has been that blood has been shed in our cause, not to make

* *Cf.* John Dryden, *The Hind and the Panther*:

"For truth has such a face and such a mien,
As to be loved needs only to be seen."

conversions, but by way of reprisal and defence : it may be regretted, for the exercise of a right is at times to be regretted, but the fact remains that our nature, the nature of truth, is peaceful, patient, full of tolerance and equity, and that, only after having endured martyrdom countless times, has it permitted itself to set up a kingdom where the spiritual sword defended it from the temporal sword. Our raiment is stainless, Gentlemen, it is white, it is the raiment of truth.

To resume. Truth and error contend for the world. The weapons of truth are persuasion, those of error are force. Man, by his understanding, tends towards truth ; by his body he tends towards error, which is favourable to his passions. Truth, then, tends to prevail by the understanding, and error by physical force. If civil society wishes to defend truth, that is, to hinder violence from molesting it in its attempts at persuasion, it is doing its duty ; if it wishes to go further, and make truth a fundamental law of the State, it is only exercising its right. Notice, Gentlemen, the difference between these two cases : when civil society only protects truth or the Church against violence, it performs a duty ; when it makes truth its fundamental law, it exercises a right that belongs to every society—the right of freely placing itself under the yoke of certain laws. And, truly, if there is one grand idea, noble and worthy of man, it is that of taking truth for a fundamental law.

Were this only a utopia, it would be a very beautiful one. But the human passions, which respected that state of things in antiquity because religion was then mingled with error, have attacked it energetically in modern times because religion was wholly pure, holy, and true. The passions have been victorious ; civil society, cleft to its depths, rests nowadays upon a totally opposite principle, the full and entire liberty of worship. May this liberty, at least, not be merely an empty word, and may the Church at last obtain from error the peaceful and full exercise of her spiritual rights, that is to say, of the right of persuading mankind ! This is our most buoyant hope and our most cherished desire.

XII

Catholicism and Ireland

Open a map of the world, and at its two extremities look at those two groups of islands, the islands of Japan and the British Isles. Follow the trace of the nations upon that line of 3,000 leagues; count Japan, China, Russia, Sweden, Prussia, Denmark, Hanover, England, Ireland. You will count in vain; among all those kingdoms there is none in which the Church of God enjoys her inalienable liberties and in which her teaching, her sacraments and her worship are not obstructed and held captive. What! so many nations despoiled of the holy independence of the children of God! What! among those two hundred millions of men there have been found no hearts strong enough to maintain somewhere the rights of conscience and the dignity of the Christian! Ah, do not deceive yourselves; God has never left truth without martyrs, that is to say, without witnesses ready to serve it even with their blood; and as the scandal of oppression had here reached its term in extent, duration, and vigour, God on

His side has also wrought a new miracle in the history of martyrdom. Men and families had been seen to die for their Faith, and from that grand spectacle to leave behind them only their mutilated limbs and their imperishable remembrance. But a whole people living in continual martyrdom, generations of souls bound together by the same terrestrial country, and transmitting to each other, through hereditary suffering, the heritage of the Faith—this had never been seen. But God has willed and produced it; He has willed it in our own times, and has produced it in our own times. Among those nations which I have pointed out as linked together in space and in spiritual bondage, there is one which has not accepted the yoke; which, materially enslaved, has remained free in soul. One of the proudest royal powers of the world has struggled hand to hand with her in order to drag her into the abyss of schism and apostasy.* Doomed to a war of

* *Cf.* H. Belloc, *Europe and the Faith* (London, 1920): "The efforts to destroy the Faith in Ireland have exceeded in violence, persistence, and cruelty any persecution in any part or time of the world." And John (Viscount) Morley, *Edmund Burke* (London, 1867): "Protestants love to dwell upon the horrors of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, of the proscription of Philip the Second, and of the Inquisition. Let them turn candidly to the history of Ireland from 1691 down to 1798, and they will perceive that the diabolical proscription of the Penal Laws, and the frenzied atrocities with which the Protestants suppressed the Catholic rising at the close of the century, are absolutely unsurpassed in history." And Dr Johnson, quoted in Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, chap. xxi: "The Irish are in a most unnatural state, for we see there the minority prevailing over the majority. There is no instance, even in the Ten Persecutions, of such severity as that which the Protestants of Ireland have exercised against the Catholics."

extermination, she has yielded without betraying either the courage of combat or the courage of faithfulness to God. Despoiled of her native land by gigantic confiscation, she has cultivated for her conquerors the fields of her ancestors, and from the sweat of her brow has gained the bread which sufficed for her to live with honour and to die with faith. Famine disputed that crust of bread with her; she lifted up to God her eyes which did not accuse Him. War nor spoliation, want nor famine, has made her either perish or apostatize; her oppressors, however powerful, have not been able to exhaust life in her vitals or duty in her heart. In fine, as even the boldest and basest sword cannot kill for ever, tyranny has sought something even more constant than steel, and the Revelation of St John has been verified in that victim nation: a time came for her when *no man might buy or sell but those that have in their hand or on their forehead the mark of the beast*, that is to say, of apostasy.

This people, then, at a single stroke was deprived of all its political and civil rights. Every human being is born with rights. Even the inanimate stone brings with it a law which protects and ennobles it; it is under the guardianship of the law of nature—an eternal law which pertains to the essence of God and which does not allow you to touch even an atom without respecting its entity and force. Every being, however feeble, is thus endowed with a portion

of the power and eternity of God ; and, *a fortiori*, man, a creature that thinks and wills, the first-born of the Divine intelligence and volition, is protected by the eternal law of God ; so that to deprive man of the rights native to his being is a crime so great that the very stones would cry out against the ravisher, accusing him of parricide and sacrilege. What then must it be to deprive a people of its rights ? Yet this has been done to that heroic people whose sufferings and constancy I have mentioned ! Yet more, Gentlemen ; this rape of right, this legal murder of a nation, has not been perpetrated in an absolute, but in a conditional manner : for it was always possible for the nation and its members to save themselves from public and civic death by apostasy. The law said to them : " You are nothing ; apostatize, and you shall be something. You are slaves ; apostatize, and you shall be free. You are dying of hunger ; apostatize, and you shall be rich." What a temptation ! and how deep was the calculation, if conscience were not deeper even than hell ! Fear nothing for this martyr people ; for two whole centuries it has been too great to yield to that seduction,* and has lifted its trembling hands towards Heaven,

* *Cf.* Lecky, *Hist. of England in the 18th Century* : " The Irish Catholics clung to their old faith with a constancy that never has been surpassed, during generations of the most galling persecution, at a time when every earthly motive urged them to abandon it, when all the attractions and influence of property and rank and professional eminence and education were arrayed against it." And Hilaire Belloc: " The preservation of the Faith by the Irish is an historical miracle comparable to nothing else in Europe."

saying in its heart: "God sees them, and He sees us; they will have their reward, and we shall have ours."

I shall not, Gentlemen, pronounce the name of that dear and hallowed people, that people stronger than death: my lips are not pure and ardent enough to utter it; but Heaven knows it; the earth blesses it; every generous heart opens for it a country, a love, a refuge. . . . O heaven that sees, O earth that knows, O all of you, better and more worthy than I, name this people for me, name it; say: Ireland!

Ireland, Gentlemen! Such was her condition when the 19th century dawned and had been heralded under the hand of God by two peals of thunder: the one exploded in the New World, upon shores as yet hardly known, the other in the bosom of our own country. These two shocks of Providence warned the oppressors of Ireland; by such memorable catastrophes God caused them to suspect that a reign of justice and liberty was preparing in the conscience of mankind; and whether from fear or from the rising of compassion, they loosened a little the fetters which chained the life of their victim. Among the rights then restored was one which appeared to be of little value—that of defending private interests before the civil tribunals of ordinary jurisdiction. Assuredly, Gentlemen, the concession seemed to be of but slight importance and of little interest for the future;

but England had not reflected that that concession would give freedom to speech, and that to give freedom to speech is to deliver God ; for speech from lips inspired by faith is truth, charity, authority. Speech teaches, strengthens commands, combats ; speech is the true liberator of consciences ; and when oppressors open the field to it we may believe, without being wanting in respect for them, that they know not what they do. Speech then became free in Ireland, and from the first day, in the very hour, whilst it still wondered to find itself no longer shackled, it touched the heart and lips of a young man of five-and-twenty, and found that those lips were eloquent and that heart great.*

Daniel O'Connell foresaw that he would one day be master of his fellow-countrymen ; and henceforth he meditated on the plan he should adopt for their emancipation. Where should he begin ? Which of the links of that heavy chain was the first to be broken ? He considered that the rights of conscience surpassed all others ; that there, in that servitude of the soul, was the centre and corner-stone of all tyranny, and consequently that this was the first point to attack. The emancipation of the Catholics of Ireland and England became his daily preoccupation, the constant dream of his genius ; until at last, after twenty years of effort and

* " Daniel O'Connell was the greatest popular leader whom the world has ever seen," wrote Gladstone.

labour, he was able to say without pride that he was the king of Ireland: and on the 13th of April, 1829, Catholic Emancipation was won.*

Let us stop for a moment, Gentlemen, to reflect upon the causes of so memorable an event; for you will understand that a single man, whatever his genius, would not have been able to bring about this revolution if it had not been prepared beforehand and brought to maturity by the very force of events. It was amongst us, in France, in the 18th century, that the principle of liberty of conscience resumed its course which had been so long weakened and turned aside. The philosophy of that age, although an enemy to Christianity, borrowed from it the dogma of the liberty of souls, and upheld it with unfailing zeal —less, doubtless, from love of justice and truth than for the purpose of undermining the reign of Jesus Christ. But, whatever its object, it revived in men's minds the notion of just tolerance, and prepared for future ages the emancipation of so many Christian nations oppressed by the iron hand of despotism and heresy.† Thus God draws good out of evil, and nothing is effected in this world, even

* *Cf.* Card. Newman: "What I desiderate in Catholics is the gift of bringing out what their religion is. . . . I want an intelligent, well-instructed laity. In all times the laity have been the measure of the Catholic spirit; they saved the Irish Church three centuries ago, and they betrayed the Church in England." *Cf.* also E. Vacandard, *De la Tolérance Religieuse* (Paris, 1908).

† *Cf.* Lacordaire's *Letters*: "What do we appreciate in the modern times which began with the American Revolution in 1776? We appreciate in them the ruin of three elements subversive of the Catholic Church; absolutism, gallicanism and rationalism."

against truth and justice, which will not, by a Divine transformation, sooner or later serve the cause of justice and truth. That idea of liberty of conscience had passed to England and the United States of America ; and O'Connell, who met it on its glorious way, easily made it serve to further his work.*

The principle of liberty of conscience, upon which depends the future of truth in the world, was already supported in Europe by the power both of opinion and of Catholicism ; for wherever opinion could speak it demanded liberty of conscience, and in most of the great Catholic States it was already established in fact and of right. Protestantism alone had not yet given its adhesion to that solemn treaty of souls ; notwithstanding its principle—in appearance liberal†—it practised the native intolerance of heresy. Thanks to O'Connell, to-day public opinion, Catholicism, and Protestantism, that is to say, all the intellectual and religious forces of Europe, are agreed to base the work of the future upon the equitable recognition of liberty of conscience.

But O'Connell was a liberator also in another manner. Not only is the Church persecuted here below, mankind is also persecuted. Man-

* *Cf.* Lord Acton, *History of Freedom and Other Essays*, pp. 399–401 ; also Tocqueville, *France before the Revolution*, chap. xv.

† *Cf.* Lecky, *op. cit.* : " The persecution of religious opinion and the suppression of any form of religious worship must always appear peculiarly culpable in Protestants, whose whole theory of religion is based upon the right of private judgment."

kind, like the Church, is turn by turn persecuted and delivered, and for the same reason. The Church is persecuted because she possesses rights and imposes duties; mankind is persecuted because it too has rights and duties in its domain. Justice weighs upon us, and we seek to escape from it, not only to the detriment of God, but to the detriment of man. We deny the rights of man as we deny the rights of God; and it is a great error to believe that there is but one combat on earth, and that, were the Church to sacrifice her eternal interests, there would not remain other interests for which it would be necessary to draw the sword.* Let us turn to O'Connell, to see him as a son of man after having seen him as a son of God.

He was fifty-four years of age when Catholic Emancipation was gained. But hardly had he given himself time to see his triumph before he quitted his seat in the Parliament of Westminster and hastened to Ireland. He goes to tell his beloved Erin that it is not enough to have emancipated conscience, that God and man are inseparable, and that, after the country of heaven has been served, if something still remains to do for the country of earth, the first commandment alone is kept and not the second; and as the two form but one, not to have kept

* *Cf.* Tolstoy, *op. cit.*: "It is wrongly said that the Christian teaching relates only to personal salvation and not to public, political questions." And John Morley, *Rousseau*: "Those who would treat politics and morality apart will never understand the one or the other."

the second is not even to have kept the first. He declares to her that it is his intention to recommence his life, and not to rest for a single day till he has obtained equality of rights between England and Ireland. For such was the state of the two countries as regards human rights that the one hardly appeared to be a satellite to the other. England had diminished the prosperity, the commerce, the enterprise, all the rights of Ireland, in order to increase her own; and that odious policy placed Ireland in a state of inferiority which made well-nigh impossible her very existence.* Such is despotism, Gentlemen; and we are all guilty of it in some degree, all of us more or less diminish the rights of others in order to increase our own.

But as long as there remains a great and fearless soul capable of boldness of speech, despotism is restless, troubled, fearing that eternity is conspiring against it. Other things alarm it but little. Do you appeal to arms

* *Cf.* Card. Manning, *Letter to Gladstone*: "We hold Ireland by force, not only against the will of the majority, but in violation of all rights, natural and supernatural." And Card. Newman, *Letter to Father Hopkins, S.J.*: "If I were an Irishman, I should be (in heart) a rebel." Also T. W. Russell, M.P., *Ireland and the Empire* (London, 1901): "Had I been an Irish Catholic, had my ancestors suffered as the Irish Catholics suffered, had my country been oppressed, neglected and plundered as their country was for 70 years—I do not go behind the Union—I should, had I escaped the gallows, have been against England. No Catholic Irishman, reading the history of his country from 1800 to 1870, could be anything save a rebel." And the *Church Times* (London, Oct. 27, 1922): "The Orange Lodges have been a disgrace alike to Christianity and civilization."

against it? It is but a battle.* To a riot? It is but an affair of the police. Violence is of time, right is heaven-born. What dignity, what force there is in the right which speaks with calmness, with candour, with sincerity, with perseverance, from the heart of a good man! †

To his persevering demand for right, O'Connell added a condition which always appeared to him to be of sovereign importance. According to his view of liberty, every one that seeks to promote it should claim it equally and efficaciously for all, not only for his own party, but for the party opposed to his; not only for his own religion, but for all others; not only for his own country, but for the whole world. Humanity is one, and its rights are everywhere the same, though their mode of exercise may vary according to the existing state of manners and of minds. Whoever in his cry for right excepts a single man, whoever consents to the enslaving of a single man, be he white or black, were it only to extend to the unlawful binding of a single hair of his head, that person is not sincere, and

* Fichte wrote: "War contains not the slightest guarantee that through it right will be led to victory. The contrary is just as often the case."

† "National hatreds," wrote Oscar Wilde, "are always strongest where culture is lowest." And Dean Inge, *Outspoken Essays*, 2nd series: "The most violent nationalism is generally that of some ill-conditioned province, which has persuaded itself that it is a fine thing to hate the rest of the political aggregate to which it belongs." Also Edmund Burke: "History consists of the miseries brought upon the world by pride, ambition, avarice, revenge, lust, sedition, hypocrisy, and ungoverned zeal. These are the causes of the storms. Religion, morals, laws, prerogatives, privileges, liberties, rights of man are the pretexts."

deserves not to fight for the sacred cause of humanity. The general conscience will always reject the man who asks for a liberty that either excludes or neglects the rights of others; for exclusive liberty is nothing but a privilege, and a liberty forgetful of others' rights is nothing better than treason.* But there is in the heart of the honest man who speaks for all, and who, in speaking for all, will seem sometimes to speak against himself, there is in that man a sovereign power, a logical and moral superiority, which must infallibly win recognition and sympathy.†

* *Cf.* Daniel O'Connell, quoted in O'Neill Daunt's *Personal Recollections of O'Connell*: "Nothing can be more opposed to the spirit of our Saviour than to persecute for errors in religious belief. Nothing can be more exquisitely absurd. Persecution may make a hypocrite, but it will not make a convert. If a man is already disposed to reject my creed, I only give him an additional reason for rejecting it if I persecute him." And Lord Acton, *op. cit.*: "Those who—in agreement with the principle of the early Church, that men are free in matters of conscience—condemn all intolerance, will censure Catholics and Protestants alike. Those who insist on the right and duty not only of professing but of extending the truth, must, as it seems to us, approve the conduct both of Protestants and Catholics, unless they make the justice of the persecution depend on the truth of the doctrine defended, in which case they will divide on both sides."

Cf. also Fénelon's advice to the Old Pretender, quoted in Ramsay's *Vie de Fénelon* (London, 1723): "No human power can force the impenetrable entrenchments of the freedom of the mind. Compulsion never persuades, it only makes hypocrites. When kings interfere in religion, they do not protect it, they enslave it. Give civil liberty to all, not by approving all religions as indifferent but by permitting in patience what God permits, and by endeavouring to bring persons to what is right by mildness and persuasion."

† *Cf.* Lacordaire, *Letters*: "When one has to visit galley-slaves, prisoners, the poor and sick, Christianity seems to work of itself. Everybody understands what it means, but the instant you apply it to politics all is changed! And here lies the true difficulty of our work, in bringing the spirit of charity and peace to bear on the very thing which naturally tends to produce the strongest hatreds and most terrible divisions; here impartiality is set down as weakness, mercy becomes a treason, and mildness is but the wish to please

Yes, Catholics, know this well: if you want liberty for yourselves, you must will it for all men under heaven. If you ask it for yourselves simply, it will never be granted; give it where you are masters, so that it may be given to you where you are slaves.*

O'Connell also understood in another sense that it is necessary to be irreproachable in claiming rights. He felt for authority, and for the law which is its highest expression, a sincere and religious respect. For authority is also a liberty, and whoever would defend one by attacking the other, knows neither what he says nor what he does.† Authority is an integral

everybody! There is nothing so easy as to go along with your party, and no harder work than that of justice towards opponents."

* The story of the massacre by the Irish Catholics of Protestants and English in Ulster in 1641, as related by Voltaire, Carlyle, J. A. Froude, and others, is a calumny on the Irish Catholics. John Mitchell and Lecky have disproved that charge.

† *Cf.* Lacordaire, *Life of St Dominic*: "War is the act whereby a nation resists injustice even unto blood. Wherever injustice exists, there does a legitimate cause for war exist until satisfaction be gained. War is then, after religion, the first of human duties. One teaches the right, the other defends it."

In his speech in his own defence before an assize court in 1831, Lacordaire (who had studied for the bar) said: "If I have incited to disobedience to the laws, I have transgressed gravely, for the laws are sacred. They are, after God, the salvation of nations; and no one is more bound to honour them than is the priest. Yet I admit that I do not feel for the laws of my country that love and enthusiasm which the ancients experienced in such ardour. When Leonidas died, these words were engraven on his tomb: "Go traveller, and tell Sparta that we died here in obedience to her sacred laws." Yet, I, Gentlemen, in dying, would not desire a similar inscription. I have no wish to die for the sacred laws of *my* country. For the time is past when law was the venerated expression of the traditions, the customs, and the gods of a people. All is changed. A thousand crises, a thousand opinions, a thousand tyrannies; the axe and the sword clash in our confused legislation, and to die for such laws would be to adore at the same time glory and infamy. There is one law, however, which I respect, which

part of liberty, linked to it by a manifest correlation, even as duty is to right, and as the right of one man necessarily connects itself with the duty of another. It is for this reason that all civil governments, as well as the great Evangelic one, have consecrated the kindred ideas of duty and right, of liberty and of authority.* The hand that separates these two

I love and which I will defend, it is the Charter of France. Not that I cling exclusively to the shifting forms of representative government, but because the Charter stipulates for liberty, and, in the anarchy of the world, there remains for men but one country, liberty."

* *Cf.* Bossuet, *Universal History*: "The groundwork of a Roman, if we may be allowed the expression, was the love of his liberty and of his country: one of these principles caused him to love the other; because he loved his liberty, he also loved his country as a mother that brought him up in sentiments equally generous and free. Under the name of liberty the Romans as well as the Greeks figured to themselves a state in which no individual was subject to any power but the law, and in which the law was stronger than any individual." Also Lacordaire, *Conferences of Toulouse*, Eng. trans. (London, 1875), iii: "What all-powerful charm makes the Greeks and the Romans still our teachers, and places their books in the sacred hands that hold open the Gospel before the regenerated world? The ancients decided, and we have not altered their decision, that there are four fundamental virtues, which we call cardinal virtues. We need to have in our hearts prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude. We must have especially that last one which crowns the others by raising them to the dignity of martyrdom, the virtue which Rome called force (*fortitudo*) and the Greeks by the very name of Rome; for Rome in the Greek tongue signifies *strength*, a prophetic name given by Providence to that city which was destined to govern the world by the empire of right and the empire of character. For think you that Rome reigned by the steel of her legions, and that Greece conquered Asia by the lance and the buckler? Rome subjected the world, Greece conquered Asia, by virtues. While the other races, bent under a settled servitude, passed obscurely through time, the genius of public life awakened on the Greek soil and on the banks of the Tiber. Speech created opinion, and opinion gave birth to the responsibility of all before the conscience of all; power became a magistracy; laws, an expression of the natural relationships between men; obedience, respect for order; glory, an ornament to the country; liberty, a right and a sentiment, the right of self-government and the sentiment of personal dignity." And F. Ozanam, *Dante and Catholic Philosophy*, Eng. trans. (New York,

annihilates them, and never will the people in which they are not equally venerated become a free people.*

1897): "The characteristic quality of the Roman genius, that which it owed to itself and to the old Latium where it had its birth, was the practical sense of justice, the instinct of rights, of law. Laws were reduced to a science—jurisprudence. Eloquence defended law at home, while arms imposed it abroad; the entire existence of the ancient Romans was enclosed in this circle. . . . The Greeks fought for glory, the Romans for empire. The Romans desired not so much the admiration as the obedience of men. They used letters as a power. . . . The three chief things constituting Roman civilization were religion, laws, and letters. The downfall of paganism was not at all what we have been accustomed to think it." *Cf.* also Dean W. H. Hutton, *The Hope of Man* (London, 1920): "The climax, the completion, of all history is human liberty." And Sir J. Harington, *Epigrams*:

"Treason doth never prosper: what's the reason?
For if it prosper, none dare call it treason."

*O'Connell ardently supported Bishop Doyle's remarkable pronouncements on the feasibility of uniting the Catholic and Protestant Churches. An account of this interesting matter is to be found in Fitzpatrick's *Life and Correspondence of Dr Doyle* (Dublin, 1880), vol. i, pp. 328–354.

XIII

The Love of Jesus Christ

Lord Jesus, during the ten years I have been speaking of Thy Church to this congregation, it was indeed always of Thee that I have spoken; but now I come more directly to Thyself, to that Divine Countenance which is the object of my daily contemplation, to those sacred Feet which so often I have kissed, to those loving Hands which have so often blessed me; to Thy Head crowned with glory and with thorns; to that Life the savour of which I have breathed since my birth, which my youth disregarded, which my early manhood regained, and which my riper age worships and proclaims to every creature! O Father! O Master! O Friend! O Jesus! help me now more than ever, for the words that fall from my lips must needs glow with the richness of Thy touch and make my hearers feel Thy nearness and adore Thee!

In pursuit of love all our life, we never attain it save in an imperfect state which makes our heart bleed. And even if we did win it in life, what would remain of it after death? The

prayer of a friend may follow us beyond the grave, a faithful memory whisper our name; but soon heaven and earth have moved forward, oblivion descends, silence covers us, from no quarter is ever again wafted across our tomb the ethereal breath of love. It is gone and for ever; and such is the history of man's love.

But I am wrong, Gentlemen. There is One Man Whose grave is guarded by love; One Man Whose sepulchre is not only glorious but beloved. There is One Man Whose ashes, after the lapse of eighteen centuries, have not grown cold; Who is daily born again in the memory of countless numbers of men; Who is visited in His cradle by shepherds and kings bearing gold and incense. There is One Man Whose footsteps a great multitude is found to trace unweariedly, and Who, though He is out of sight, is followed by that crowd through all the sites of His former pilgrimage—upon the knees of His Mother, along the shores of the lake, on the mountain tops, in the valleys, under the dark shade of the olives, in the solitude of the desert. There is One Man, dead and buried, Whose sleeping and waking are watched, Whose every word still vibrates and brings forth more than love—the virtues that spring from love. There is One Man Who, centuries ago, was nailed to a gibbet, and daily millions of worshippers take Him down from the throne of His agony, cast themselves on their knees before Him, and kiss His bleeding

feet with unquenchable love. There is One Man, scourged, crucified, killed, Whom His unutterable Passion has raised from death and infamy to the glory of a never-dying love, which finds in Him peace, joy, and ecstasy. There is One Man, pursued even to the tomb by undying hate, Who, requiring from each successive generation apostles and martyrs, sees them stand forth in His service. There is One Man, and One alone, Who has established for ever His love upon earth, and Thou, O Jesus, art that Man! Thou Who in Thy love hast vouchsafed to baptize me, to consecrate me, to anoint me, and the sound of Whose very name at this moment opens the depths of my soul and brings forth these tones which overwhelm and surprise me!

There is a day when, at the corner of a street, or in a lonely path, we stop short, we listen, and a voice whispers to our conscience: "Here is Jesus Christ!" Heavenly moment when, after so many beauties tried and found wanting, the soul discovers the only beauty that does not deceive! Those who have not seen it may put it down as a dream, but those who have can never forget it. Whilst in all other contemplation, the light, however pure, falls upon frail and corruptible beings, here the light is eternal, the object unchangeable. Whilst age and the slightest of accidents imperil our dearest friendships, the love of God in Jesus Christ gathers

strength from our very misfortunes and our weakness. It may be lost at the stage of youth, because it is through another that we have conceived it, in the lap of our mother ; but when once we have made it our own, when once it has become the fruit of our experience in manhood, nothing can ever take away from its firmness and its warmth. It replaces what is falling away and fading in us each day. It lives in our ruins to prop them up, in our forlornness to console us, and when we touch at the hoary summit of life, at the regions of ice that does not melt, it is our last warmth and our last breath. Our eyeballs are sightless, but we can still weep, and these tears are for the God Who wept over us.

Who shall tell you what the love of Jesus Christ is, if you have never known it ; and if you have but for a single instant tasted it, who shall recount to you its unutterable effects ? Not the transports of pride in the day of its greatest triumphs, nor the fascination of the flesh in the hour of its most deceitful delights, nor the mother receiving a son from the hands of God, nor the bridegroom leading his bride into the chaste abode of nuptial bliss, nor the poet in the first flight of his genius, nor anything that is or has been, affords an image or a shadow, or even an inkling, of what the love of Jesus Christ is in a soul. Everything else is either too much or too little. Jesus Christ alone has the measure

of our being; He alone has made of greatness and lowliness, of strength and of unction, of life and death, a drink such as our heart yearned for without knowing it; and those who have once tasted this cup, in the day of their manhood, know that I speak the truth, and that it is an intoxication from which there is no recovery.*

* This last paragraph is from one of Lacordaire's *Letters*; the preceding one, from his 5th Conference of Toulouse; and the others occur in the 37th and 39th Conferences of Notre Dame. Père Chocarne, O.P., has written an account of the inner life of Lacordaire, describing his amazing mortification and humility.

Printed in Great Britain by MACKAYS LTD., Chatham.

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